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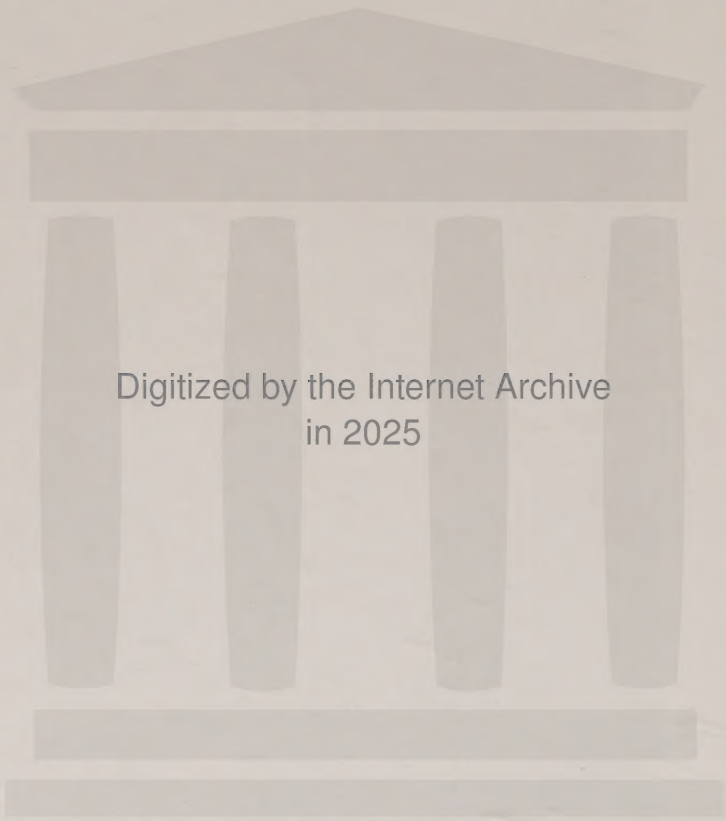
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Mason Whiting Tyler

Recollections of the Civil War

With Many Original Diary Entries and Letters Written from the Seat of War, and with Annotated References

By

Mason Whiting Tyler

Late Lieut.-Colonel and Brevet-Colonel, 37th Reg't Mass. Vols.

Edited by

William S. Tyler

With Maps and Illustrations

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
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The Knickerbocker Press, New York

PREFACE

AT the time of his death, my father was nearing the completion of a first draft of his manuscript, which, if he had lived, would have been continued to the conclusion of the war, and then carefully revised in the light of his lifelong study of the historical events. In the loss of a more perfect historical whole, we have gained much that might not have survived a careful revision.

In this first written expression of his recollections and studies of the War time, while as yet he had not a perspective of the book as a whole, his reminiscent moods have led him back over those paths primarily, where his interest was most intense, and the depth of the impressions and intensity of the feelings have been the impulses which for the most part determined what the subjects should be and how much should be said of them. While not a history as a whole, events so selected and so related have a peculiar historical value of their own. There are many histories of the war and autobiographies of great generals, but autobiographies of the soldier in the camp and in the ranks are few. The life of the nation has overshadowed for the time the lives of the men who saved the nation; but it is the men for whom the nation is worth saving, and whose lives in the war are mere incidents of histories, who are the subject of this unfinished story by one of the soldiers.

In fairness to the author who did not live to correct and perfect his work, an effort has been made to verify each event. The task has been arduous and difficult, and the results, which in some cases are unsatisfactory, and for which the author is in no way responsible, are shown by references in foot-notes to the authorities.

Chapter XIII. concludes the manuscript, as he wrote it, and the remaining chapters continue the story as told in his letters, written during the war in the midst of the scenes which they relate, on the march and on the battle-field. The style is quite different, and the language, which is not always approved, is retained for the sake of the freshness and vigor of the story as the soldier told it, at the time, to his family and friends at home. As these letters have their own historical value and peculiar interest, free use of them has been made also in the footnotes in the earlier chapters.

The historical introductions to the later chapters, and many of the connecting links of historical explanation therein, were written by the author's college classmate and lifelong friend, the Reverend Calvin Stebbins, who has bestowed time and labor unsparingly upon all parts of the work.

W. S. T.

New York,
April, 1912.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE[1]

MASON WHITING TYLER was born at Amherst, Massachusetts, June 17, 1840. His father, William Seymour Tyler, was for over sixty years Professor of Greek at Amherst College and was a man of great learning and industry. He taught every member of fifty-one successive classes. Harvard University conferred upon him both the degrees of D.D. and LL.D., although in only two other instances had that university honored one man with both degrees. The latter degree was conferred upon him at the celebration of Harvard's 250th anniversary in 1886.

Colonel Tyler's ancestry is interesting, as it covered the earliest period of New England Colonial history. Among his ancestors may be mentioned the *Mayflower* pilgrim, William Bradford, second Governor of Plymouth Colony; Thomas Hinckley, Governor of Plymouth Colony from 1680 to 1692; Thomas Welles, Colonial Governor of Connecticut, 1655 to 1656 and 1658 to 1659; Major-General John Mason, the hero of the Pequot War and Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial forces in Connecticut; Thomas Willet, in 1647 the successor of Miles Standish as Captain of the Military Company of Plymouth Colony, and in 1665 first Mayor of the city of New York. Of the grantees named in the Royal Charter of Connecticut, 1662, Colonel Tyler was

[1] Extract from Report of the New York State Bar Association, vol. xxxi., 1908, p. 459.

descended from four: John Mason, Richard Treat, Anthony Hawkins, and Thomas Welles. Twenty of Colonel Tyler's New England ancestors were Puritan ministers, among them Rev. Thomas Hooker, called by Mather in his *Magnalia*, "The light of the western churches"; Rev. Thomas Thacher, first pastor of the Old South Church, Boston; Rev. Jonathan Edwards, whom John Fiske calls "Probably the greatest intelligence that the western hemisphere has yet seen"; Rev. James Pierpont, one of the founders of Yale College; Rev. Samuel Whiting, the first minister of Lynn, and his wife, Elizabeth St. John, who was the sister of Oliver St. John, Lord Chief Justice of England under Cromwell, of whom Campbell says in his lives of Chief Justices, "With the exception of Oliver Cromwell he had more influence on the events which marked the great constitutional struggle of the 17th century than any leader who appeared on the side of Parliament. He was the first Englishman who ever seriously planned the establishment of a Republican form of government in this country."

Six of Colonel Tyler's ancestors were Revolutionary patriots: Robert Ogden, speaker of the New Jersey Colonial Assembly; Timothy Edwards; Dr. William Whiting, who was prominent for his services and experiments in the manufacture of gunpowder for the Continental Army; Lieutenant Jonathan Seymour; Captain John Tyler, and Deacon John Tyler, Jr. Other ancestors of interest might be mentioned such as Cornelis Melyn, in 1642 made Patroon of Staten Island under the Dutch.

Colonel Tyler was brought up in the college town of Amherst. His father was widely known as a teacher and scholar, and most of the distinguished visitors of

the college were at one time or another entertained at the old home, which was in this and many other ways possessed of rare advantages for the sons of whom Colonel Tyler was the oldest. He prepared for college at Amherst Academy and at Williston Seminary, Easthampton, Mass. He entered college in 1858. He was a member of the Psi Upsilon Fraternity, to which his father, his three brothers, and his two sons have also belonged, and in which he always took the greatest interest, being prominent in its councils, and earnestly active in its welfare. In scholarship he stood well. He was Commencement orator, and a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. From 1860 to 1862 he was also Class President. On July 10, 1862, he was graduated with the degree of A.B., and three years later received the degree of A.M.[1]

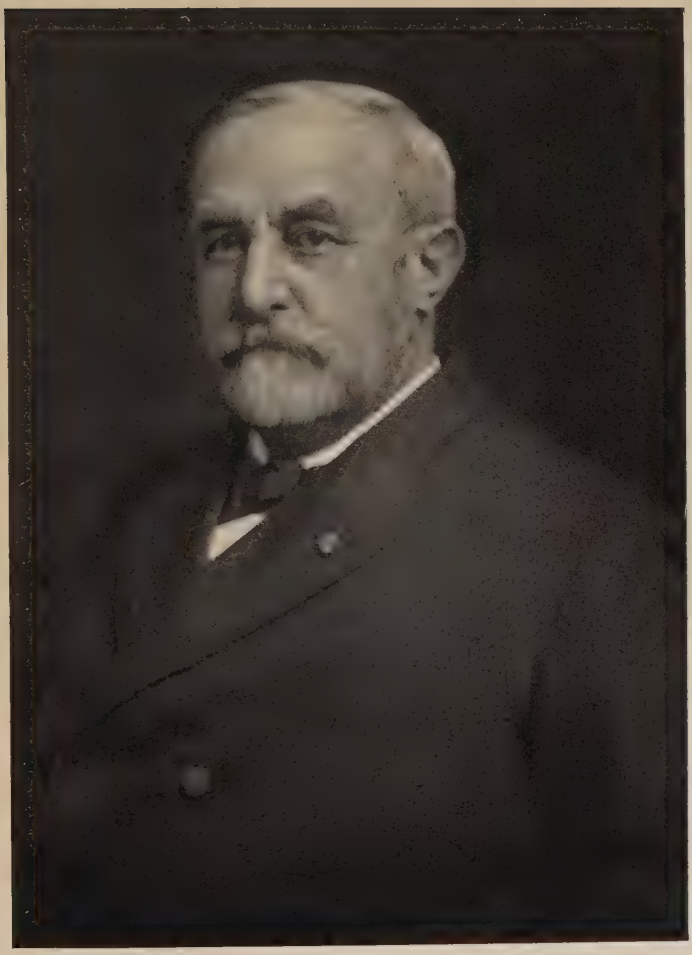
. . . . . .

At the close of the war he returned to civil life and took up the study of law in Columbia College Law School, 1865–66, was admitted to the bar in 1866, and then practised three years in the law office of Evarts, Southmayd & Choate. In 1869 he formed a partnership with General Henry E. Tremain, under the firm name of Tremain & Tyler. In 1893 he formed a new partnership under the name of Tyler & Durand, and in 1903 that of Tyler & Tyler, consisting of himself and his two sons.

He conducted many important cases, one of the most famous of which was the suit of Marie *v.* Garrison,

[1] His enlistment and service in the Civil War, covering the three years immediately after his graduation from college in July, 1862, are the subject of the story contained in this volume.

resulting in the recovery of over a million dollars. Tremain & Tyler were the attorneys for the importers in the famous "hat trimmings" cases, Hartranft *v.* Langfeld (125 U.S., 128), Robertson *v.* Edelhoff (132 U.S., 614), and others, resulting in the recovery by his firm of several million dollars from the government. They were counsel in the sugar importation cases, Whitney *v.* Robertson (124 U.S., 190). He was also prominent in the removal cases (100 U.S., 457), and as counsel in Pacific Railroad *v.* Ketchum (101 U.S., 289). He was connected with important business enterprises; President of the Cumberland Coal and Iron Company, and director of the Columbus and Hocking Coal and Iron Company, and was many years director and Vice-President of the Rossendale-Reddaway Belting and Hose Company. But he was most active in public enterprises and benevolences. Instrumental in founding the Plainfield Public Library and Reading Room in 1880, the second to be founded in the State of New Jersey, he was its President until his death; was promoter and first President of the Organized Aid Association of Plainfield and North Plainfield; was also one of the early Trustees of the Muhlenberg Hospital; President of the Music Hall Association, and President of the Anti-Racetrack Association of New Jersey. No worthy cause of public interest in Plainfield went without his support. He was also one of the Trustees of Amherst College, 1901–1907. He became a member of the New York State Bar Association in 1890. He was also a member of the Society of the Mayflower Descendants in New York and New Jersey, and Governor of the New Jersey Society; a member of the New Jersey Historical Society, and of the Societies of the Sons of the Revolution, Colonial Wars, and Colonial Governors, and a



MASON W. TYLER IN 1907.

From a photograph by Gessford.

member of the New York Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, and numerous other societies and clubs.

Colonel Tyler married on December 29, 1869, Eliza Margaret Schroeder, of New Milford, Conn., a woman of rare beauty of person and character, with whom he lived most happily until her death, only nine months before his own. She was the daughter of Rev. John Frederick Schroeder, D.D., of Trinity Parish, New York City, from 1823 to 1839, who won for himself a reputation of being one of the most learned and able preachers in New York City. Mrs. Tyler's grandfather was Elijah Boardman, a Revolutionary soldier and one of the early United States Senators from Connecticut. Colonel Tyler's sons William S. and Cornelius B. Tyler are both members of the New York Bar.

Colonel Tyler died suddenly July 2, 1907, in the Presbyterian Hospital, New York, three weeks after an operation from which he was supposed to have recovered.

General Tremain, his law partner for twenty-four years, said of him: "His was one of those rare natures who, in business or in social life, radiate the benevolences of humanity and goodness and peace that dispel the shadows of evil. He was a patriotic soldier, an honored citizen, a beloved husband and father."

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BOOKS REFERRED TO: ABBREVIATIONS

"O. R.": "War of The Rebellion. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies." Government Printing Office, Washington. 130 volumes.

"War Maps": Atlas to accompany the Official Records (above). 3 volumes.

Grant's Memoirs and Sheridan's Memoirs are the "Personal Memoirs" of the two generals, published by Charles L. Webster & Co., N. Y., the one 1886 and the other 1888.

"Bowen": "History of the Thirty-seventh Regiment Mass. Volunteers," by James L. Bowen, 1884.

"Rhodes": "History of the United States," in seven volumes. Harper & Bros., 1893.

Recollections of the Civil War

INTRODUCTION

I HAVE frequently been asked by members of my family and by personal friends to put into some permanent form the story of my experience in the great Civil War, usually called the War of the Rebellion. I am fully aware that in that struggle there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of young men, who had just as interesting experiences as I had, and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of others who passed through much more thrilling experiences. In fact, mine was not an exceptional, but a very common experience.

The war was, however, a very extraordinary war. Nothing like it ever occurred before, and I doubt if anything like it will ever happen again. It was a war between the respective champions of free and slave labor, living under the only successful experiment in republican government which up to that time the world had seen. Their ancestors had taken possession of this continent and occupied different portions of it for the purpose of exploiting the institutions of constitutional liberty. Together they had achieved independence from foreign control. Together they had built a great and powerful nation.

But two civilizations had grown up, one in the North, the other in the South; one based on free labor, the other on slave labor; one devoted to commerce and manufactures, the other to agriculture; one, under the influence of Northern skies, developed a race cold and phlegmatic; and in the other, under Southern influences, an impulsive and domineering people was developed. Originally they both agreed that slavery was wrong. But in the North slave labor was always unprofitable, while in the South, after the invention of the cotton gin, it became exceedingly profitable, and as the North had largely shared in the profits of the slave trade, which was mainly responsible for the rapid growth of slavery in the South, the South naturally felt that if slavery was wrong, it did not lie in the mouths of their Northern neighbors and fellow-countrymen to reproach them on account of it. Further than this, when slave labor became profitable it was very easy for them to convince themselves that human slavery was not wrong, and they soon began to defend it as a divinely ordained institution, and to claim for it supremacy in the government and throughout the United States. They were not satisfied with having it simply a domestic institution limited to the Southern States; they wanted to make it a national institution, and to spread it over all the States. They exultantly boasted that Cotton was King, and entitled to rule the world. So great did their influence become that Congress passed an act compelling the Northerner to catch and return the Southerner's fugitive slaves, and finally the Supreme Court came under its power and handed down a decision declaring that the black man was a chattel. In accomplishing this the South acted as a unit, while the North was divided.

The cotton mills of the North depended on the South for supplies, and Northern merchants sold goods in the South, bought and shipped the cotton, the sugar, and the turpentine of the South abroad. Many of them were dealers in slaves, and they and their ancestors had made fortunes in the slave-trade and in furnishing supplies for the slave population and market. These elements, united with a solid South, served to keep the political powers of the country in the control of the party that sympathized with the South and was much the smaller section. Thus, during the greater part of the first sixty years of the nineteenth century, the government of the United States was controlled by the South and its allies from the North, and during the last half of that period the Southern leaders were struggling like Titans to acquire new territory and add distinctively slave States to the Union, that they might increase their vote in Congress and in the Electoral College.

In 1856, the Republican party planted itself squarely on the platform, "No more slave territory," and two years later, in 1858, Abraham Lincoln announced that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," and proclaimed that the vital question before the American people was, "Whether the United States should be all slave or all free." No middle ground was possible. In 1860, Lincoln was elected President on the Republican platform and his own proclaimed prophecy. The South at once seceded, and fired on Fort Sumter. It was the beginning of a war which in four years filled six hundred thousand graves with men in the prime of life.

CHAPTER I

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS, AND THE FIRST WEEKS OF CIVIL WAR

I WAS born June 17, 1840, at Amherst, Massachusetts. My father was at the head of the Greek Department in Amherst College for nearly sixty years. It would be hard to find a more quiet and peaceful hamlet of twenty-five hundred inhabitants than Amherst was in my boyhood days. There was not a public bar nor a drinking saloon in the town. There was not a man in the town worth one hundred thousand dollars. They mostly owned the houses they lived in, and if the houses had mortgages on them they were gradually paying them off. No family had more than one servant; most of them, not any servants. One of the principal industries of the place was furnishing board to the students of the college. There were few wealthy students. Many of the students were working their way through college to become ministers or missionaries. The price of board ranged from seventy-five cents to two dollars and a quarter a week.

The climate in winter was very severe. For three or four months deep snows and ice held sway. Furnaces even in public buildings were unknown in those days. Huge cast-iron stoves heated large rooms, while smaller rooms trusted to the efficiency of open fireplaces, and later to the sheet iron air-tight stoves. The halls and

the sleeping-rooms (except the room called the nursery) were as cold as the outer atmosphere. Wood was the only fuel.

As my father's salary was small, every member of the family was expected to contribute his or her share towards carrying on the domestic establishment. My three brothers and I worked the garden in summer (which comprised nearly an acre of ground), raised vegetables and fruit, harvested the hay, took care of a horse, a cow, and the chickens, sawed the wood and piled it, and at all seasons carried it by armfuls into the house until the wood-boxes were filled, built and fed the fires, and, if occasion required, helped about the cooking, the bed-making, the dish-washing, and the other domestic employments. Many hands made light work, and we were adepts in the art of despatching work. Our hours for play were short and few in the week, but they were appreciated and made the most of.

Of course the college attacted a great many distinguished strangers and visitors from all over the world, and as accommodations at the hotels were very uncomfortable, such persons were generally entertained by some member of the college faculty, who in such cases exercised a very simple but charming hospitality. I have seen under my father's roof and at his table governors of States, United States Senators, and members of the House of Representatives, justices of the courts, foreign ministers, distinguished preachers, orators, and teachers, from my own country and from foreign lands, and professors connected with foreign universities, altogether too numerous to mention. They came to do honor to Amherst College and its neighboring institutions, to see and admire the beauty of the scenery, to

study and explore. Such an institution is always a centre of mental activity and curiosity.

New England was at this time the storm-centre of anti-slavery sentiment. Webster, Everett, Choate, many of the orthodox clergy in Boston, and many of the faculty of Harvard College were leaders of the conservatives, and strongly influenced sentiment in Boston and vicinity; while Garrison, Phillips, Theodore Parker, and the Beechers were typical abolitionists, and had a strong following throughout New England, particularly in the interior towns and communities. They appealed to the Puritan conscience of the North, and the Anglo-Saxon worship of manhood and liberty as manifested in the Declaration of Independence, and in the growth of free, republican institutions in Europe and America. The South answered by such acts as the Fugitive Slave Bill, by compelling the rendition of Anthony Burns into slavery from Boston, by attempting to compel the admission of Kansas into the Union as a slave State against the will of the inhabitants, and by striking down Senator Sumner of Massachusetts in the Senate-chamber.

All this time the South was threatening to secede from the Union if her demands were not complied with, and it was unsafe for a citizen of a Northern State to travel or be seen in one of the Southern States. The President of the United States, Mr. Buchanan, with his Cabinet, were in substantial sympathy with the South, and were using their official positions to aid the South, rather than the North, in the event of secession. After January 1, 1861, Buchanan's back was slightly stiffened by the substitution of four Northern Democrats in the place of the same number of Southern sympathizers as members of his Cabinet. In the meantime, the

Southern States were arming and drilling and actually erecting batteries and siege guns for the overthrow or capture of the national fortresses situated on Southern soil. In fact, all was doubt and uncertainty in the North, while the South was full of confidence and decision.

After Mr. Lincoln's election, and before he was inaugurated, South Carolina and five other States passed ordinances of secession and established a Confederate States government. Still not a move was made by the North. Then there were rumors that the South would prevent Mr. Lincoln's inauguration by capturing or assassinating him, and still President Buchanan discouraged any movement of troops looking towards the protection of Washington, for fear of exciting the South.

Lincoln clandestinely entered the capital and was inaugurated, and immediately took measures peaceably to provision our forts. He equipped a steamer with food supplies and sent her to Fort Sumter. Then the Southern batteries opened, and Fort Sumter surrendered within thirty-four hours. War had begun.

Yet up to this time the idea of the possibility of war had hardly entered the Northern mind. Now all was changed. The North was on fire to avenge the insult to the flag. All individual differences of opinion generated by self-interest, by timidity, by religious scruples, or by any other of the thousand and one influences that divide minute conflicting parties, were fused in the tremendous heat of patriotism, enthusiasm, and rage, aroused by the fact that a blow had been struck at the nation's life. Mr. Rhodes says:

> The sentiment of patriotism rose supreme in all hearts. The service of the country superseded bread-winning labor

and business, and called for the sacrifice on its altar of parental feeling and wifely tenderness. It was the uprising of a great people. . . . Men who had never dreamed of a soldier's life hurried to enlist. Laborers, mechanics, clerks, students and professors of the colleges, many sons of wealthy and influential families, enrolled themselves for the common cause.[1]

On Friday, the 19th day of April, 1861, the Sixth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, while passing through Baltimore to go to the rescue of the national capital, was fired upon by Southern sympathizers in that city, and for several days after, communication between the North and Washington was closed, and the fate of the capital was in suspense. The excitement in the North, and particularly in Massachusetts, was most intense.

On the following Sunday afternoon, April 21st, my father preached a rousing sermon in the college chapel at Amherst, "On themes suited to the circumstances, and in a strain intended to inspire courage, heroism, and self-sacrificing devotion." We filed out of the chapel after the service, and our Professor of Chemistry, afterward Colonel Clark, said that he would go with a company of one hundred men if they would be enlisted, and in less than half an hour, one hundred of the college students had given their names. Professor Clark telegraphed at once to Governor Andrew that he had a full company of students ready to start at his call. Governor Andrew replied that he could not equip all the men who had offered their services. The students' services would be required later; meanwhile, let them pursue their studies. I was one of the one hundred young men

[1] Vol. iii., p. 358.

who tendered their services on this occasion, and were refused.

In the autumn of 1858, I entered college as a member of the class of 1862. Of course, collegians, like other young men of the country, were deeply interested and stirred by what was happening in the political history of the country, but until Sumter was fired upon, and even until Virginia and the border slave States actually seceded, vast masses, perhaps a majority, of the people in the North could not bring themselves to believe that the South would secede and establish a separate government. The political leaders of the South had threatened so long and so much that there was a very general feeling that they were playing a desperate game of bluff. The men who actually believed in secession were supposed to constitute a small minority of the people of the Southern States. They were described as "fire-eaters," and were, for the most part, citizens of the so-called Cotton States. In territory and in the numbers of their inhabitants these States constituted a small portion of the United States. The border States did not raise cotton, and, outside of the property interest in the preservation of the institution of slavery, they were as closely allied with the North as with the South, and, as to slavery, its perpetuation in the States where it already existed was guaranteed by the Constitution, and reasonably secure. Only its extension over additional territory and into new States was assailed by the Republican party, and in 1860 the Republican party succeeded through divisions in the Democratic party, rather than through its ability to control sufficient votes to elect its own candidates.

Under these circumstances it was very easy for a Northern man to persuade himself that there was no real

danger of secession on the part of the Southern States. In fact, there seemed to be no reasonable argument in favor of secession and numberless sound arguments against it. The fact that the North believed in the impossibility of secession is indicated by the utter refusal to make any provision against it, or even to prepare for national self-preservation, while the South was carrying off arms, planning to seize forts, organizing and drilling an army, passing ordinances of secession, and actually establishing a rival government. When Sumter fell, and while our flag was trailing in the dust, we rubbed our eyes to find out whether we were awake. It took us forty-eight hours to recover from our amazement, and then all was excitement and anger.

But what a condition existed for undertaking a great war! Our regular army, consisting of about sixteen thousand men, was scattered from Maine on the east to California and Texas on the west and south. Out of one hundred and ninety-eight companies, one hundred and eighty-three were stationed on the frontier or were en route to distant points west of the Mississippi. The remaining fifteen companies were stationed along the Canadian frontier, and on the Atlantic coast from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico. Outside of the regular army, our Northern citizens had for three generations been devoted to the arts and employments of peace. In the War of 1812, they had disgraced themselves by a cowardly surrender of the national capital, and by losing every battle between land forces fought on Northern soil, with perhaps the single exception of the battle of the Thames.

The Mexican War was waged for Southern aggrandizement, and was mainly a school of instruction for the Southern soldier, from which the North derived

very little benefit. Our Northern armories and arsenals had been robbed during Buchanan's administration for the benefit of the South. At the very beginning of the struggle, the most distinguished and leading officers of the regular army, such as Lee, the two Johnstons, Bragg, Beauregard, Hardee, and others, resigned their commissions and espoused the cause of the South. But beyond all this, while the men of the North were commercial in habit and spirit, those of the South were of a decided military caste. They were trained in the use of arms; they practised duelling; were good horsemen; and cultivated all the manly sports which gave nerve and dash and inured them to hardship.

Most of our arms that were available were in the hands of the militia. They were of the musket type—not rifles. Until we could buy or manufacture more guns, we could not equip an army of adequate size. Our finances in 1860 had been so mismanaged that the government had not money enough to pay the salaries of its Senators and Representatives, let alone the extraordinary war expenses. Buchanan's administration had done its utmost to wreck the Treasury as well as the army and navy. The public credit was so low that the obligations of the United States were already selling at a discount of fifteen per cent. Congress had not provided a way for meeting such an emergency. There were no laws authorizing the raising or sustaining a larger army than the existing regular army. We had no precedent for such an army, no experience in organizing such an army, no officers whom we knew to be capable of handling it. The military establishment and the financial establishment to pay for it had both to be created anew. It was a large school without teachers.

No wonder that Mr. Lincoln began with great

moderation. On April 15, 1861, forty-two days after his inauguration, by proclamation he called upon the governors of the several States to furnish 75,000 militia *for three months'* service to be used to suppress unlawful combinations and to cause the laws to be executed, and summoned both houses of Congress to assemble on the next Fourth of July, "to consider and determine such measures as in their wisdom the public safety and interest may seem to demand."[1] This much he could do under an act of Congress passed in 1795. On May 3, 1861, he issued an additional proclamation calling for 42,034 volunteers to serve for three years in the army, and 18,000 seamen to serve not less than one nor more than three years in the navy.

Up to this time President Lincoln had not expressed nor declared any intention of waging war upon the South. He would do his utmost to repossess the property of the United States, and enforce the laws.

[1] *Works* (Federal Ed.), vol. v., p. 284.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST FIFTEEN MONTHS OF WAR

FROM APRIL, 1861, TO JULY, 1862

ON April 17, 1861, the Commonwealth of Virginia passed an act rescinding the vote by which it became one of the United States, and on April 24th entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Confederate States. On April 18th Robert E. Lee said to Francis P. Blair that secession was anarchy, that if he owned all the negroes in the South he would sacrifice them for the Union; but on the 20th he tendered the resignation of his commission in the United States Army and accepted a commission from the Commonwealth of Virginia as Major-General and commander-in-chief of their forces.[1]

On April 18th, 460 Pennsylvania volunteers without arms, and a company of regulars from Minnesota, reached Washington from Harrisburg; on April 19th, the Sixth Massachusetts Volunteers arrived[2]; on the 20th the Gosport Navy Yard near Norfolk was partially destroyed by the Union forces and abandoned.[3]

On the 25th, the isolation of Washington and the anxiety of the North were relieved by the arrival, after

[1] Rhodes's *History*, iii., p. 365; *Recollections and Letters of General Lee*, p. 25, etc.; and *Abraham Lincoln*, by Nicolay and Hay, vol. iv., p. 159.

[2] Rhodes, iii., p. 362.

[3] *Id.*, p. 364.

days of delay at Annapolis, of the Seventh New York and the Eighth Massachusetts regiments,[1] and on May 13th communications between Philadelphia and the capital by way of Baltimore were re-established. On April 24th in answer to an inquiry from Reverdy Johnson as to whether he meditated invasion or subjugation of the South, President Lincoln wrote: "I have no objection to declare a thousand times that I have no purpose to invade Virginia or any other State, but I do not mean to let them invade us without striking back."[2]

The border States of Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Maryland were threatening secession if the United States attempted to coerce, or in any way used force against the South.

The Confederate Congress met at Montgomery, Alabama, on the 29th of April,[3] and on the 6th of May passed an act recognizing the existence of war between the United States and the Confederate States, and at the suggestion of President Davis to raise an army of 100,000 men, immediately authorized him to accept without limit volunteers "to serve for or during the existing war."[4]

While the United States was enlisting its soldiers for thirty days, three months, nine months, or for one, two, or three years, and constantly mustering and discharging them, the Confederate States pursued one consistent course, and enlisted its men for the war. This gave the South an immense advantage in the war. Many mistakes of a similar character will call for mention as our story progresses. Congress met pursuant to the call of the President on July 4th, and

[1] Rhodes, p. 374. [2] Nicolay and Hay, *Complete Works*, ii., p. 38.
[3] Rhodes, iii., p. 395. [4] *Id.*, p. 396.

authorized the President to accept the services of 500,000 volunteers, and directed the issue of $250,000,000 of bonds.[1]

On May 24th, the Federal troops crossed the Potomac and occupied Alexandria and the Heights of Arlington.[2] At Alexandria, Major Ellsworth was shot and killed in the act of hauling down the Confederate flag from the cupola of the main hotel of the city. It was an inglorious end to a brief but rather promising career of one of our young soldiers who had achieved fame by drilling a company of Zouaves in Chicago, and exhibiting them in the Eastern States.

Public clamor and political impatience now demanded an advance of the army. The newspapers talked of occupying Richmond in twenty days. There were 75,000 men called into the service in April by President Lincoln, whose terms of service would expire about August 1st. They had been drilled as regiments and organized into brigades for a week or a fortnight, but had never been manœuvred in brigade formation, and as they could no longer be retained in the service a battle must be fought to give the government the full benefit of these short enlistments. It mattered not that the army had never been manœuvred together and was essentially a rabble.

The battle of Bull Run was fought on the 21st day of July.[3] About 29,000 Confederates met 28,000 Federals. It ended in a panic and the rout of the Union forces, with the loss of about 1500 men. After fighting bravely for several hours, they ran without a rally until they reached Washington.

I well remember the excitement at Amherst when we received the news of this disaster. We had been fed

[1] Rhodes iii., p. 437. [2] *Id.*, p. 435. [3] *Id.*, p. 446.

on enthusiasm after Sumter fell, created by Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers, and it was a common rumor that in all the States there were more volunteers than could be supplied with arms. The North was once more unanimous. How could we fail! It was the first great setback of the war. We had taken a lesson in the hard school of experience. We had to take many more before we were graduated from the college of war. This first lesson was humiliating and very disappointing; but we set our teeth and went to work to enlist half a million men and organize them into an army. General Scott was retired and General McClellan, who had been successful in a small way in West Virginia, was brought to Washington and made commander-in-chief. During the Crimean War he had been sent abroad as member of a commission to gather military information, and had witnessed the operation of the armies there engaged. He applied himself with intelligence and energy to his great task of forming an army out of the great mass of ignorant and inexperienced men, officered by equally untrained men, who were gathering at Washington in answer to their country's call.

At the call of the President, the several States assembled the regiments. An influential man, very likely a politician, would be authorized by the governor to raise a regiment. He would promise other influential citizens positions as captains or lieutenants if they would assist by raising companies. After the regiment was raised, theoretically the men had the right to choose their own officers. They usually selected the persons who had been active in securing their enlistment, and in this way the promises of the higher regimental officers were made good; but the fact that the final right of election rested with the enlisted men led to

much familiarity of a political or love-making character between the men and the office-seekers which was not conducive to good order or discipline. The result was that every regiment had to go through a weeding-out process among its officers before it was fit for duty.

All the officers of the army having a higher rank than colonel were appointed by the President, who, in addition to his civil office, was by the Constitution made commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States. As our Presidents, with one or two exceptions, were not soldiers or men of military education or training, this resulted in subordinating the army and navy to the civil authorities. This was all very well in time of peace, but in time of war was a most hazardous arrangement. Politicians controlled the armies and largely managed and controlled the campaigns. The disasters of the War of 1812 were probably due to the incompetence of our commanders, who were none other than our President and Secretary of War, who were both civilians, and tried to direct things from their headquarters at Washington. The same arrangement was undoubtedly responsible for the misfortunes of the Army of the Potomac in its early campaigns.

The President was the constitutional commander. He was a civilian fully occupied with his civil and political duties. Therefore, he devolved his military duties upon his Secretary of War. He too was a civilian, and he appointed his favorites, who in many instances were only politicians, to responsible army positions, and constantly meddled with the control of the army and the plans of the military leaders in the field.

General McClellan was a good engineer. He encircled Washington with a cordon of forts and earthworks of the most improved pattern. He was a skilful or-

ganizer. By the month of October, 1861, he reported an effective force of 169,000 men divided into five divisions of three brigades each. We now know that in the Confederate army opposed to him there were but 41,000 men. But he always insisted that he was outnumbered by the force opposed to him, and was never quite ready to move.

During the late summer and autumn of 1861, the Twenty-first and Twenty-seventh Regiments of Massachusetts Volunteers were recruited from the vicinity of Amherst. Our Professor of Chemistry, William S. Clark, went as Major of the Twenty-first and took with him as the Adjutant of the regiment, Frazer Stearns, the son of our President, and several students or graduates. Several of these men were among those who had been enrolled and tendered their services to go with Clark on April 21st.[1]

At Amherst College the period between the fall of Sumter and my graduation in July of the following year was spent in pursuing the usual college curriculum, supplemented by a half-hour's drill four days in each week, under a militia officer, Luke Lyman, afterwards Colonel of the Twenty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, who came over from Northampton three or four times a week and drilled and disciplined us in manœuvres and tactics. We used poles for guns. Real muskets were too scarce to admit of their being supplied to schools or colleges. Each class became a company and every man was expected to attend the drills. In the absence of Colonel Lyman the class captain acted as drill-master. During the winter and spring months the drill was suspended on account of the want of a proper hall or drill-room.

[1] *Supra*, p. 8.

The class of 1862 was more fortunate than the other classes in having for their captain a very enthusiastic member, who before he came to college had attended a military school, and was regarded by us as a very accomplished soldier. We were very proud of our Captain Vance, and in October, 1861, when Colonel Lyman organized the Twenty-seventh Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, he made Vance Captain of one of its companies, and took him with him to the war. Vance afterwards became Colonel of an Indiana regiment.

Major Clark was my father's next-door neighbor, and Frazer Stearns had been my playmate and schoolmate for years before he entered college. Major Francis A. Walker, afterwards Assistant Adjutant-General of the Second Corps, was graduated at Amherst in 1860. He was a man of amazing energy, of handsome person, fine address, and was distinguished in every department of life which he entered. He was a brilliant writer, a fine soldier, a great political economist, a remarkable statistician, and he has left the Massachusetts Institute of Technology at Boston as a monument to his administrative genius and executive force in the department of technical instruction. He was two years in advance of me in college, but I knew him intimately, and greatly admired him. After graduation, he entered the law office of Devens & Hoar, in Worcester, Massachusetts, as a student. When Devens was made Colonel of the Fifteenth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, he took Walker with him as the Sergeant-Major of the regiment. He was with his regiment at Ball's Bluff when, on October 20th, the Twenty-first, with fragments of the Twentieth Massachusetts and the Forty-second New York regiments, was baptized in blood and fire, and by the criminal mismanagement of their commanders,

nearly one half of those engaged were lost. The North was profoundly stirred, and Massachusetts was horrified at the wanton sacrifice of her young men.

The Twenty-first and Twenty-seventh Regiments were assigned to General Burnside, and went with him to North Carolina. I have spoken of Clark and Stearns and many fellow-students as being members of the Twenty-first; in the Twenty-seventh was Vance in command of the Northampton Company A, and Company D was largely composed of men from Amherst and vicinity. Early in March, 1862, Adjutant Stearns was killed at the battle of Newbern.[1] It was a daily occurrence to see in the papers among the lists of killed or wounded the name of some acquaintance or friend, or to meet them on crutches, or bandaged, or with an arm in a sling. The death of Adjutant Stearns produced a profound impression. The prominence of his family, his Christian character, and his heroic death so soon after enlistment united to give him fame and to enroll him with Ellsworth, Winthrop, and Shaw, among the martyred dead.

During the spring of my sophomore year, I had suffered from a severe attack of what the doctors then called lung-fever; I suppose now they would call it pneumonia. For the last two years of my college course, I was supposed to be marked for consumption. I was six feet in height, and when I was graduated I weighed 128 pounds. I was urged to leave college for a year, but I preferred to graduate with my class. The condition on which I was allowed to continue in college was that after graduation I should take a year and devote it to recreation. My mother and father had planned for me a long sea voyage.

[1] O. R., ix., p. 222.

As yet there was no lack of volunteers for the army and navy, although the system of stimulating enlistments by bounties had already begun, but instead of keeping the old and experienced regiments full, they followed the practice of forming new regiments, with officers for the most part green and untried. It was a pernicious system, because in this way old and tried regiments that had made a name for themselves, and were provided with a full complement of trained and experienced officers who knew how to take care of those under them in every emergency, would become skeletons, while the full regiments were composed entirely of green recruits, and were mainly handled and manœuvred by equally unskilled citizens. On the other hand, the Confederate government had, during the winter, met with a series of reverses which roused them to much greater exertion. On the coast they had lost Roanoke Island,[1] Port Royal,[2] and the mouth of the Mississippi.[3] In the interior they were beaten at Mill Spring,[4] Forts Henry,[5] and Donelson,[6] and Island Number 10,[7] and were driven out of Missouri.[8] Early in April, McClellan transferred his army to Fortress Monroe,[9] and threatened to approach Richmond from the south. The Confederate army opposed to McClellan numbered 53,000 men,[10] that of McClellan, about 158,000.[11] The Southern capital was in danger. While Yorktown was besieged for a month,[12] the government in its des-

[1] Feb. 7, 1862, Rhodes, iii., p. 581. [2] Nov. 7, 1861, *id.*, p. 490.
[3] Apr. 27, 1862, *id.*, p. 629. [4] Jan. 19, 1862, *id.*, p. 581.
[5] Feb. 6, 1862, *id.*, p. 582. [6] Feb. 16, 1862, *id.*, p. 593.
[7] Apl. 7, 1862, *id.*, p. 628. [8] *Id.*, p. 617. [9] *Id.*, p. 615.
[10] Apl. 17, 1862, *Johnston's Narrative*, p. 117.
[11] Not all available. See *McClellan's Own Story*, pp. 163–4, and telegram and letter from President Lincoln to McClellan April 6 and 9, 1862.
[12] Rhodes, iii., p. 617.

peration put forth its reserve strength. General Lee was military adviser to President Davis, and General Johnston was at the head of the army of defence.[1] General Upton, in his *Military Policy of the United States*, says of this period (page 315):

It was during this month so lost [April] that the Confederate Congress abandoned voluntary enlistments, adopted conscription, and took away from the governors the power to commission Confederate officers; it was during this month when the Army of the Potomac should have been at the doors of Richmond, that almost every regiment of the Confederate army was reorganized; it was during this month that Confederate conscripts began to pour into the old regiments instead of being formed into new organizations; it was during this and the two succeeding months, while McDowell was held back, that these conscripts, associated with veteran comrades, acquired courage and discipline, and it was by concentration during the last month that the Confederate army was made to equal its opponent. The loss of battles was but a trifle compared with the other consequences of this one month's delay. It arrayed against us a military system which enabled the Confederate government to call out the last man and the last dollar as against a system based on voluntary enlistment and the consent of the States.

On May 31st and on June 1st the battle of Fair Oaks, or Seven Pines, was fought.[2] It was a repulse for the Confederates, but McClellan retreated. General Johnston was wounded on the first day, *i.e.*, May 31st, and on June 1st General Lee was assigned to the command of the Confederate army. At this time the Army of the Potomac was within four miles of Richmond. If

[1] Apl. 17, 1862, *Johnston's Narrative.*, p. 117.
[2] Rhodes, iv., p. 24.

General Grant had then been in command he probably would have captured it. But McClellan delayed, and Lee at once commenced to fortify, and in three weeks he pronounced the city safe. At this time, McClellan's army numbered 105,000 and Lee's 64,000.[1]

Now Lee summoned Jackson from the Shenandoah Valley,[2] where, by the rapidity of his movements and the fierceness of his attacks, he had inspired the North with terror.

Thus was ushered in "the Seven Days' Fight," during which Lee, with the loss of a little over 20,000 men in all, compelled the Army of the Potomac to give up its base of supplies on the York River at West Point, and to fall back upon the James River, with a loss of less than 16,000 men. Between armies of the size of these and for seven days of fighting, these losses were small. Lee's losses were much heavier than McClellan's, both absolutely and relatively; but the latter's loss of prestige and morale was awful. McClellan's published correspondence shows that at the time he was overwhelmed with fear. He believed that he was outnumbered two to one. Misleading stories for the purpose of deceiving him as to the number of troops in Lee's and Jackson's armies were published in Richmond and were accepted by him as true. The rebel scouts and spies obtained accurate information about the numbers in our armies, but both at Manassas and before Richmond, McClellan received most exaggerated reports of the numbers of the forces opposed to him, and he never questioned them. He kept promising to move, and all the time fever and disease were making havoc with his army, and yet he was never ready. Even now his army was not so much

[1] Rhodes, p. 24, note 1, and p. 33, note 1.

[2] *Id.*, p. 33.

damaged as Grant's army was after the second day of fighting in the Wilderness. But there was this difference, Grant was not whipped, McClellan was.

The country never knew darker days than the first half of August, 1861.[1] It took several days to find out what had happened. McClellan was ominously silent. It was the end of a period of magnificent promises built upon a lavish expenditure of money, human blood, and the nation's vital resources. All was wasted owing to the lack of competent military leadership. President Lincoln feared to call for further volunteers lest in the general discouragement and gloom the people should fail to respond. No popular leader ever felt the public pulse more accurately than he did. It ended in his secretly getting the governors of the several States to offer him their proportions of an additional levy of 300,000 men for three years' service, and within a month he asked for 300,000 more men for nine months' service.

Commencement exercises at Amherst for that summer began on Sunday, July 6th, and ended Thursday, July 10th. It was a week of the deepest gloom. McClellan was reported to be safe on a gunboat on the James. Where the Army of the Potomac was, nobody knew. Yet the people were not discouraged. They were beginning to appreciate that it was a life-and-death struggle, to be waged until one side or the other was exhausted. Governor Andrew, as was then the custom of the Governor of the Commonwealth, attended at Amherst Commencement Day, and after the public exercises were over, I had a conversation with him in which I told him I had thought of travelling for my health, but had concluded to go to the war, and he

[1] So in original. Probably meant 1862.

replied by offering me a commission if I would raise a company.

A town meeting was held, at which a bounty of $100 to be paid to each enlisted man was voted, and Mr. William F. Stearns, son of our President, who resided in India and was temporarily in this country, offered a further gift of $25 to every man who would enlist from Cambridgeport or Amherst. On the evening of Commencement, we had a public meeting, and I enlisted, and the next day I began the work of enlisting a company for the war.

CHAPTER III

GOING TO THE WAR

JULY TO OCTOBER, 1862

ENTHUSIASM had spent its force. The glamour and tinsel of a soldier's life no longer lured to enlistment. Everybody recognized that it was a most serious business. My work was to travel about the country hunting for men of proper age and build to serve as soldiers, appealing to their patriotism and sense of duty to induce them to enlist. It often required several visits to secure one man. If they were willing to go themselves, family, sweethearts, and friends had to be consulted. One day I would go to Hadley, another to North Hadley, a third to Hatfield, a fourth to Sunderland, a fifth to Shutesbury, etc. I worked evenings as well as in the daytime, because I could get the men together. During the day they were at work. Henry Hills, a genial, wholesouled merchant of Amherst, with a large acquaintance in our neighborhood, sometimes went with me, but more frequently I went alone. By the first of August I had sixty names on my list, and I went down to Boston and reported to the Governor, who commissioned me a Second Lieutenant in the Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers; and I was on that day mustered into the service of the United States.

The rendezvous of the Thirty-sixth was Camp Wool,

Worcester, but by order of the Governor, the Thirty-second, Thirty-third, Thirty-fourth, and Thirty-fifth Regiments must first be filled, and no assignments of recruits to the Thirty-sixth were made until after August 1st. At that time the unassigned fragments of companies not required to complete these four regiments were divided,—those coming from the eastern part of the State going to the Thirty-sixth at Worcester, and those from the western part of the State to the Thirty-seventh at Camp Briggs, Pittsfield. I was ordered to report with my men at Pittsfield, which I did on August 11th.

The company streets had been laid out, but all was confusion when we arrived. The camp was delightfully located on a level field one mile to the east of Pittsfield, one thousand feet above sea-level, with the beautiful Berkshire Hills and Hoosac Mountains in plain view. Colonel Raymond Lee of the Twentieth Massachusetts was in command of the camp. Two or three wall tents were erected for the accommodation of the regimental officers. A board structure, much like a barn, was occupied by the quartermaster, and a smaller structure of the same character was erected by the sutler for his own use. The first four nights after our arrival, I slept on the floor of the quartermaster's building. This was the main lodging-house for the officers, and Quartermaster Dodge was a very hospitable host. There was a small number of A-tents for so many of the rank and file as could be crowded into them. A full supply of tents did not arrive until August 23d. Uniforms and blankets were distributed to the companies on their arrival. We had a few muskets for guard purposes, and on the 3d of September the regiment was fully armed with the new Springfield rifles.

On August 12th, Major Oliver Edwards, our future Colonel, arrived and relieved Colonel Lee as commander of the camp. He had been in the service for a year, first as Adjutant of the Tenth Massachusetts, subsequently as senior aide on the staff of General Couch. He was twenty-seven years of age, keen eyed and quick in his motions. He acted while other men were making up their minds. He was a rigid disciplinarian, and inspired those under him with respect, buttressed by fear. He was kind and sympathetic with the suffering and the sick, but very severe towards any man who shirked in the performance of duty, or was shiftless. He was an unusually good volunteer officer, and the Thirty-seventh owed much of the good reputation that it acquired and sustained to the soldierly qualities of its Colonel.

Our company was soon filled by adding to the men coming with me, the recruits from South Hadley, South Hadley Falls, and Ware. When completed it was a fine body of men, largely composed of the yeomanry or the old Bay State. It had in its ranks several men of college education, a number of mechanics and machinists, a large number of young men from the farms, with two or three Germans, two Frenchmen, and four or five Irishmen. They could all read and write, and all had at least a common-school education. We were designated Company F in the regiment.

George L. Montague, afterwards Major and Lieutenant-Colonel of the Thirty-seventh, came with the recruits from South Hadley and South Hadley Falls, and immediately entered the lists as a candidate for the captain's position in Company F. He had been a year in the service, first in the Sixth Wisconsin, and afterwards on the military staff of the Governor of that State,

with whom he remained until the Governor was accidentally killed at Pittsburg Landing, and he then returned to his native State. He was born and brought up in South Hadley, was a capable man, of engaging manners, and had had experience both in the field and on staff. At that time I did not want to be captain of Company F, first, on account of the precarious condition of my health, and second, because I felt that it was better for the company, as well as myself, that we should have a captain of experience.

I was attacked with camp diarrhœa and symptoms of dysentery on August 14th, and as we had no hospital, the surgeon sent me to the Berkshire Hotel, where I remained until the 18th, when I returned to the regiment, although I was still very weak. On the 20th, Montague was elected Captain. I was elected First Lieutenant of Company F, and our commissions were dated August 13th. Captain Montague was twenty-eight, and I was twenty-two years of age. On the 30th, Company F, being full, was, with five other companies, mustered into the service of the United States.

On the morning after our arrival in camp, we were aroused and the roll was called at 5 o'clock, and on that day we had four hours of drill. Guard-mounting and dress-parade were introduced as soon as we had a sufficient number of companies to make a fair appearance. From this time until we started for Washington we had daily drills of at least four hours a day, first in squads, then in platoons and companies, and these were supplemented the latter part of the time by battalion drills and by marches of greater or less length. Regular army rations were issued to the companies, and the men were learning to cook their food, to keep clean, to take care of their clothing, and to have everything in

order to pass inspection. The officers were fed in a mess by the sutler.

In consideration of the fact that we were so soon to be separated by long distances from home, with great uncertainties of future return, the men and officers were indulged, as far as was consistent with the performance of their duties as soldiers, with facilities for seeing and visiting with their relatives and friends. They were allowed to have them in camp from early dawn until nine o'clock at night, and the officers were given leaves of absence and the men furloughs to visit their homes for two or three days. My father and brothers and several of my college classmates came down and visited me for longer or shorter periods, and I remember that such men as Dr. Humphrey, then residing in Pittsfield, but formerly President of Amherst College, and Dr. F. D. Huntington, afterwards Bishop of Central New York, a summer resident of North Hadley, and a graduate of Amherst College, came and called upon me in camp. On Friday, August 29th, I was given leave of absence until Monday noon, and I went home and spent Sunday with my family.

Colonel Edwards announced that he would give the colors to the company that would attain to the greatest proficiency in drill and discipline. Company "F" carried off the prize, and Sergeant Charles S. Bardwell, a splendid specimen of a six-footer from Whately, was selected as color-bearer, and very proudly did he carry the flag until he was promoted to a lieutenancy in the summer of 1863.

On August 22d, I had my first experience as officer of the day. It was a rainy day. Between the rain and my detail, we made the camp shine. On August 27th, Edwards got his commission as Colonel, and he

immediately appointed Captain Montague to fill the vacancy in the office of Major, and as I still did not feel equal to the captaincy, Eugene A. Allen, who had served a year as Sergeant in the Tenth Massachusetts, was recommended by Colonel Edwards for the place and duly appointed and commissioned. He was an admirable officer, and added much to the efficiency of the regiment.

The last three days of August and the early days of September were a period of great anxiety in the North. The battles of Manassas, Second Bull Run, and Chantilly were fought on August 29th, 30th, and September 1st, respectively.[1] Lee and Jackson penetrated almost to the defences of Washington. It was a repetition of the experiences of the Seven Days' Fight, with the scene transferred from Richmond to Washington. To be compelled to retreat miles in the face of the enemy and submit to a second thrashing on the field of their dishonor of the previous year was a humiliation which it would seem the Army of the Potomac might have been spared.

The most pitiable sight of all was to see our beloved President, after he had fulfilled the titanic duties devolved upon him as the civil chief of the nation, struggling to make up for the deficiencies of his military advisers and leaders. He was fully aware of his own lack of experience and capacity in this department of the government. But he could see that the army and the capital were safer if they were not so widely separated. Therefore, while he was settling the question of who should be the next commander to be tried, he listened to the advice of those who counselled the retreat of the army from the James to the Potomac. It was

[1] See Rhodes., vi., pp. 127, 129, 135.

made at a terrible sacrifice in the morale of his army. The Army of the Potomac never fully recovered from these early disastrous experiences. The atmosphere of that army was ever after charged with them.

The Twenty-first Massachusetts was one of those that suffered very severely at the battle of Chantilly. Colonel Clark[1] was reported among the killed, and for days his fate was unknown. The newspapers were full of exaggerated reports of losses, and my letters from home spoke of discouragement and mourning. In camp all was hurry and bustle with daily rumors of our departure for the seat of war. On September 6th, the ladies of Pittsfield presented Colonel Edwards with a beautiful regimental flag of silk, the staff being of oak from Mount Greylock. The presentation took place at dress-parade, and at its close, orders were read directing departure for Washington on the morrow.

Sunday, September 7th, was a very hot day. Reveille was sounded at 4 A.M., and we took a soldier's breakfast and packed our baggage. We sent home what we thought we could spare, and still our knapsacks and haversacks bulged like hay loads on farm wagons. It was afternoon when we started and marched to the public square in the town where a religious service was held. Rev. Dr. Todd prayed for us most earnestly and impressively. Crowds thronged the streets, flags were everywhere displayed, and we marched through them led by a band of music to the depot of the Boston & Albany (then the Western) Railroad, where we were loaded on twenty-five cars, and amid resounding cheers were started for the city of Hudson, where we arrived about 6 o'clock, and were escorted by the fire department and the local militia from the Hudson depot a

[1] See p. 18.

mile across the city, and embarked on board the steamer *Oregon*, for New York.

After the heat and excitement of the day, it was a great relief to experience the cool breezes and refreshing surroundings of the river. We were too tired, and darkness would not permit us, to see the magnificent scenery through which we were passing. But we enjoyed its effect and slept as only tired, healthy men can sleep.[1]

At 5 A.M. of the next day, Monday, September 8th, we were landed in Jersey City at the wharf of the New Jersey R. R. & Transportation Co., and there waited three hours. An uncle and cousins of mine met me with a basket of provisions, and after the regiment landed, we had a picnic on the dock. About nine o'clock we were again loaded into cars which did not get outside the boundary line of Jersey City until noon, and then the train loitered around on its way to Philadelphia all the afternoon, and arrived there about seven o'clock in the evening.

During the whole war, Philadelphia was famous for the hospitality with which it treated the Union soldiers. Never a regiment went through the city that was not most bountifully fed at its Cooper shop, or at some other equally good place of entertainment. The Thirty-seventh, during its term of service, passed through that city six times, and on each occasion received the same generous treatment at the hands of the Quaker City authorities. On the particular occasion of which I am now writing, the soldiers were unaccustomed to the hard and coarse fare which was usually dealt out to the

[1] "Officers had state-rooms, men slept as they could. A collation was served by the people of Hudson. Liquor clandestinely smuggled aboard was thrown overboard."—M. W. T.'s MS. card diary.

men in the ranks by purveyors who were hired to feed them wholesale, and the diet that they had in camp was none too good for human beings. Therefore, when they reached Philadelphia, they had a hearty appetite for the dainty supplies given them, and some of the wags in Company F remarked that they ate enough to last them through their entire term of service.

At midnight we were loaded on freight cars, and started on our way southward, with most of the men asleep on the floor of the cars.[1] A few miles out of Philadelphia, our train crashed into a passenger train mostly filled with soldiers returning to Washington from hospitals, on their way to rejoin their regiments. The train run into was halted between the stations, and was telescoped by our train, which received no injury because it was composed of freight cars, while the passenger train into which we ran was wrecked from end to end. During the next two or three hours we rescued out of the wreckage the mangled remains and corpses of more than thirty victims of the collision. A third train ran into the rear of our train while it was standing on the tracks. I speak of this to show how dangerous the railroad service of that time was. We were detained by this accident until eleven o'clock on the following day, when we were put on board a new train and moved slowly southward. We reached Wilmington, Delaware, in the early afternoon.

Whenever we stopped the farmers and country people brought generous supplies of fruit, peaches, pears, plums, and grapes, and emptied them into our cars. At Wilmington the train stopped, but we were fed on board the cars with nearly as much generosity and bounty as the regiment had received at the hands of

[1] M. W. T.'s card diary says, "I slept on the floor of a car."

the authorities in Philadelphia. Wilmington was only second to Philadelphia in its generous treatment of the soldiers of the Union army when they passed through that city. They seemed to believe it their duty to make up for the deficiency of hospitality shown by the people of Baltimore to the soldiers of the North. A little later in the afternoon, after leaving Wilmington, we crossed the Susquehanna on the ferry-boat *Maryland*. At Havre de Grace, we began to realize that we were in a State where the sentiment in favor of the South distinctly asserted itself. Wherever we went the people glared at us as if we were wolves. There was no sympathy either in their looks or in their actions.

We reached Baltimore about 8 o'clock in the evening. No sign of welcome greeted us here. We marched to a rude frame building, were fed as if we were animals, and then proceeded through dark and deserted streets across the city to the Washington depot of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. It was the same route followed by the Sixth Massachusetts on the occasion of their famous trip through Baltimore. Here we spent the night and waited for transportation until the middle of the next afternoon, September 10th. Late in the morning we were loaded again into freight cars and without further incidents we slowly wended our way to Washington, which city we reached about 5 P.M. At Washington we were fed at the Soldiers' Relief Barracks in much the same way as in Baltimore.

That night my company and I slept in the yards of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, just outside the old Washington depot. There was hardly room to lie down, and the night was wet and rainy. We had occupied four days and three nights in going from camp at Pittsfield to the city of Washington. This is a fair

specimen of the way regiments travelled during the war.

Washington was at this time crowded with wounded and convalescent soldiers, and overwhelmed with recruits coming from the North to fill the vacancies caused by battle and defeat. Everywhere on the streets you saw blue uniforms discolored by service, here and there a soldier limping on crutches or a cane or with his arm in a sling, or his head or some part of his body bandaged. It was very depressing to those just entering the service.

Thursday, September 11th, we breakfasted at the Soldiers' Relief Barracks, and before noon we moved up Pennsylvania Avenue and down Seventh Street over Long Bridge to "the sacred soil of Virginia," to what was known as Camp Chase, the rendezvous of the troops coming from the North to the city of Washington, where they remained until they could be allotted to brigades or divisions in the Army of the Potomac, or some other army or post in the service. Camp Chase was situated to the east of Arlington Heights, near the fortification known as Fort Albany, and overlooked Washington, the Capitol, and most of the public buildings.[1]

On my way through Washington I was followed by a young boy, named James McHugh, who wanted me to hire him as my servant. Up to that time I had carried my own luggage, which consisted of a knapsack and haversack, because no one had offered to serve me in the capacity of a servant, and this boy looked so small that I at first treated him contemptuously, and as entirely unable and unfit for such employment. He

[1] M. W. T.'s card diary says: "It was our first real march, and was very trying and uncomfortable. I had no servant and started with my own knapsack strapped on my back."

followed me so persistently and urged me so hard to try him that I finally consented and turned over to him my knapsack; and he proved himself so tough and strong that I finally employed him, and he remained with me two years in that capacity.

After our halt at Camp Chase we laid out a camp. We were without tents, which were not issued to us until several days later. The road leading to and bordering our camp was lined with cedars. It took very little time for the soldiers to strip those cedars of their boughs and transform them into beds. As such they served an excellent purpose.

From September 12th to 30th we were very busy becoming a little better acquainted with the various drills and occupations of the soldier's life in camp. Previous to this time the Thirty-seventh had been by itself. Now we were temporarily assigned to a brigade commanded by General H. L. Briggs (former Colonel of the Tenth Massachusetts), and in a division commanded by General Casey, a regular army officer, then and afterwards stationed at Washington. There were five regiments in all in our brigade and fifteen regiments in our division.

On September 12th the first detail from the Thirty-seventh was made for picket duty. Ten men from each company were detailed, with similar detachments from each of the other regiments, to report at brigade headquarters, and the brigade detail thus collected went to division headquarters, and with the details from the other brigades, were marched by a staff officer out a mile or two to the front, where the picket line had previously been located, and we there took our first lesson in doing picket duty. We were told that bodies of Rebel cavalry or scouts were lurking in the neighbor-

hood and might attack us and attempt to break through the line, if we were not watchful. I happened to be one of the officers detailed on that occasion, and did not get much sleep or rest that night. It was a tedious vigil. The night was rainy and in the darkness I imagined I could hear sounds and almost see the enemy advancing to attack. I think we stayed out twenty-four hours. Our line was near Fairfax Court House. Next day we returned to camp, and drill commenced in earnest. On this occasion it was company drill, and I devoted the most of the afternoon to it.

September 14th was Sunday, and Sunday in the army, particularly in the morning, is devoted to a thorough inspection of the men, their equipments, accoutrements, tents, and the camp. Every gun is handled by one of the officers, and if a particle of dirt or rust or any defect is found in the weapon, the soldier to whom it belongs is sent to his quarters to put it in perfect order. The same rule applies to the equipments and clothing, and after the men are thus inspected, the company's quarters are gone through in the same thorough manner to see that they are clean and in order, and woe betide the soldier that is negligent and slovenly on Sunday morning. When engaged in the active duties of the campaign, it often happens that inspection cannot be held, and in stormy weather the routine had to be somewhat modified, but the officers of every well regulated and disciplined regiment make thorough work of the Sunday inspections, and on occasions the inspector-general from brigade or division headquarters appears and inspects the regiments and makes a report.

By the 16th of September we began to feel the effect of the fight that was going on between the Army of the Potomac and the Confederate army at Crampton's

Pass, and the next day at Antietam in Maryland. We were under orders to march on both these days, and at times by putting our ears to the ground we could recognize the sound of distant cannonading, very dimly, but with sufficient distinctness to convince us that a battle was in progress; and we soon learned from the newspapers of the terrible fighting between the two armies on the latter day. Antietam is generally recognized as the bloodiest single day's battle of the war. It was claimed as a victory by the Army of the Potomac because they held the field. It is now generally conceded that it was a drawn battle, but at the time the Northern forces got some encouragement from it under their claim of victory. Amherst College had cause to mourn over the battle of Antietam, because the Professor of Chemistry, Dr. Manross, was killed on that day. He was a noble man and a very popular teacher.

From this time until the end of the month we were very busily engaged in regimental drills and in brigade and division reviews, which latter events took place as often as every other day to familiarize the men and the officers with the movements of the troops in large bodies.

On September 29th, Monday, we were under marching orders all day. Everything was packed, and we waited until evening for the order to fall in, when an order came directing us to be in battalion line the next morning at daylight, ready to start for Frederick, Maryland. By this order twenty regiments, under command of General Briggs, were ordered to join the Army of the Potomac, and the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts was assigned to General Devens's brigade in the Third Division of the Sixth Corps, commanded by General Couch.[1]

[1] O. R., xix., Part 2, pp. 368, 373.

The Thirty-seventh started the next morning at six o'clock in accordance with this order. Just as the regiment was starting I was detailed with fifty men to take charge of the brigade camps and turn over the government property, tents, etc., and store in Washington the regimental property that could not be carried. The soldiers were allowed to take blankets, overcoats, and only one change of undergarments. The regiment spent the night in the Capitol grounds at Washington, and were allowed to visit the public buildings. In the afternoon of October 1st, they again started on cars, but the next morning found them only a dozen miles beyond the Relay House. They reached Frederick late that afternoon,[1] and from there commenced their march over the Catoctin Mountains towards Sharpsburg. On October 5th, Sunday, they arrived at their destination,[2] and received a hearty welcome from their brothers and neighbors of the Tenth Massachusetts, with whom they were to be brigaded for the next two years.

I did not fancy being separated from my regiment, but as I was not consulted, I immediately went to Washington and it was arranged at General Casey's headquarters that I should be furnished with a horse and the necessary equipment to enable me to go back and forth from Camp Chase to the city. My detail of fifty men felt very much as I did, and they wanted to get through with their work as soon as possible and rejoin their regiments. Accordingly, they worked with a will, and in a couple of days had all the brigade property ready to be transported to Washington.

[1] Oct. 2d, Bowen, p. 76.

[2] Near Downsville, where they joined the Army of the Potomac. Compare Bowen, pp. 81, 88. See War Map 27 (1).

Upon my reporting this fact to General Casey he directed me to take charge of all the other camps of his division, and care for the property in the same way that I had for those of the brigade with which I was connected. This put us back somewhat, but it gave me an opportunity to see something of General Casey. I found him very communicative. I take the following entry from one of my letters written at the time:

The other day while waiting, I had a long conversation with General Casey lasting about two hours. The discussion ranged through the realms of morals, ethics, politics, and war. He is a great admirer of New England, and is particularly proud of his native State, Rhode Island. He said he would not swap a regiment from New England for one from the Middle States with any amount of boot. He particularly inquired about the feeling in Massachusetts in reference to the President's proclamation, which he entirely approved. He was outspoken in his criticism of the military handling of our armies. He said that General McClellan and his clique were growing fat on the lean ribs of the government. He classed Burnside with McClellan, and said he was overestimated by the public. He approved of Banks and Hooker. He asked me about my education and said mathematics was the highest of sciences. He quoted passages from the Greek Testament.

The interview ended with his giving me twenty-five six-mule teams to move my stuff from Camp Chase to Washington, which I accomplished by the morning of October 6th. I then reported to him that my work was done, and turned over my vouchers, and with the necessary transportation for my detail started for Frederick, carrying two large bags[1] of regimental mail which we

[1] Weighing about sixty pounds. Letter to his mother Oct. 9, 1862.

got from the Post-office at Washington and agreed to deliver to the regiments.

Before leaving Washington we visited the Capitol, and found all of its halls and many of its rooms occupied by cots and filled with wounded soldiers.

At 11 P.M., we started for Frederick on a freight train and arrived at 5 A.M., October 7th. We took our mail bags to a vacant lot near by and began the work of assorting and did enough to find several letters for ourselves. Then we visited the hospital and talked with the wounded soldiers and also with some of the citizens. Everybody that we saw was friendly. The Thirty-seventh was reported as encamped near Harper's Ferry. We slept that night in a saloon on the floor. I had no money, and had lived by borrowing for several days past.

Wednesday, October 8th, we started for Harper's Ferry about 11 o'clock, and arrived there about 2.30 P.M. We visited the engine house where John Brown made his stand. We were told the Thirty-seventh might be at Sandy Hook, about two miles distant, so we went there. We called on Colonel Kam of the Pennsylvania Bucktails, and learned from him that the Thirty-seventh was assigned to Couch's division, Franklin's corps, Devens's brigade, and were encamped eighteen miles over the hills. We started on foot at 5.30 P.M. I had only three men of my detail belonging to the Thirty-seventh. So we four got a pole and strung our mail bags on it, and by turns carried it between us, in addition to our knapsacks and arms. It was a beautiful moonlight night. Our route lay along the base of the Maryland hills with the Potomac on our left, but soon left the river to climb the hills. At 10 P.M. we had made only three miles of progress, and were

tired enough to halt by a mountain stream that crossed the road and get a night's sleep.

On Thursday, October 9th, we arose at daylight after a refreshing sleep, breakfasted on pork and bread, and then started on our tramp. We very soon found an army wagon going to Sharpsburg, and made an arrangement with the driver to take our mail bags, and deliver them at Sharpsburg. We could then move more rapidly. It was a very picturesque road and country, high wooded mountains and beautiful outlooks, but the roads were rough and bad.

As I was descending a hill, I heard some one call: "Hallo! Mase Tyler," and looking up recognized Frank Walker, then Major on General Couch's staff. He was mounted and followed by a troop of orderlies, and was very cordial in his greeting to me. General Couch had moved his headquarters to take command of the Second Corps. He told me where to find the Thirty-seventh. After leaving him I pushed on, and arrived at Sharpsburg at 11.30 A.M. We had yet seven miles to go before reaching our destination. We found our mail bags, and arranged for their transportation to the camp of the Thirty-seventh, and then got something to eat and went forward over Antietam battle-ground, which showed the effects of the late battle by its destroyed fences, trampled fields, prostrate crops, broken down artillery caissons, and the decomposed bodies of horses, scattered among the graves of the dead. We arrived at the camp of the Thirty-seventh near Williamsport late in the afternoon, October 9th, Thursday, and were most heartily welcomed, especially as we brought the first mail they had received since they left Camp Chase.

CHAPTER IV

WITH THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC UNDER McCLELLAN AND BURNSIDE

OCTOBER, 1862, TO JANUARY, 1863

THE Thirty-seventh now numbered 971 men. They were assigned to a brigade composed of the Second Rhode Island, the Thirty-sixth New York, and the Seventh and Tenth Massachusetts. The Second Rhode Island was originally commanded by Colonel Sloane, who was killed at Bull Run, and at present was commanded by Colonel Frank Wheaton, a regular army officer and native of Rhode Island. The Thirty-sixth New York was a two years regiment, largely composed of Irishmen, and was commanded by Colonel W. H. Brown. The Seventh Massachusetts was originally commanded by Colonel Darius N. Couch, a West Point graduate, and afterwards commander of the Second Corps, and was now commanded by Colonel David A. Russell, also a West Point graduate, and one of the best soldiers in the Army of the Potomac. The Tenth Massachusetts was originally commanded by Colonel Henry L. Briggs, of Pittsfield, of sterling New England stock, and upon Colonel Briggs's promotion to be a Brigadier-General, for his gallantry at Fair Oaks, he was succeeded by General H. L. Eustis.

The brigade had already made for itself a name for

gallantry and distinguished service on the fields of Fair Oaks and Malvern Hill. It was now also the most distinctively Massachusetts brigade in the Army of the Potomac, and its commander, Brigadier-General Charles Devens, was a Massachusetts man of rare gifts, distinguished at the bar, and afterwards on the field of battle. He was later Attorney-General of the United States, and on the Supreme Court Bench of his native State, and declined an appointment as one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Sixth Corps was organized May 18, 1862, by uniting Franklin's division with W. F. Smith's division of the Fourth Corps, and after the battle of Antietam, Couch's division of the Fourth Corps was also transferred and became the Third Division of the Sixth Corps. General Franklin was in command of the corps, and General Couch was promoted to the command of the Second Corps, and General Newton to the command of our (the Third) Division. At this time General Slocum commanded the First Division, and General Hancock had just been promoted from the command of a brigade in the Sixth Corps to that of a division in the Second Corps.

Among the corps of the Army of the Potomac, the Sixth probably stood next to the Second in the number and importance of the battles in which it was engaged. Colonel Fox, in his book entitled *Regimental Losses*, at page 79, says:

> The history of the Sixth Corps, more than any other, is replete with fascinating interest. Its record is invested with more of the romance and brilliancy of war. There was the successful assault of Marye's Heights; the brilliant dash into the rifle-pits at Rappahannock Station; the deadly hand-to-hand fighting in the gloomy thickets of Spottsyl-

vania; the breathless interest which attaches to their lone fight at Fort Stevens, where, under the eye of the President, they saved the National Capitol from the hand of the invader; the victories in the Valley, with the dramatic incident at Cedar Creek; and the crowning success at the storming of Petersburg. Over all these scenes the Greek Cross waved proudly on the banners of the corps, while its veteran legions wrought deeds which linked that badge with an unfading glory and renown.

The camp of the Thirty-seventh was situated near a small village named Downsville in a beautiful grove of oak, chestnut, and walnut trees, with a green sward of grass underneath. The heavy soft turf was very grateful as a substitute for bedding, because at this time the men were for the most part obliged to spread their rubber blankets upon the ground and sleep in the open air, with their woollen blankets wrapped around them, as they had no tents. The quartermaster of our regiment had managed, as he went through Harper's Ferry, to obtain four or five wall tents with four or five extra flies, and the wall tents were used for the accommodation of the officers at headquarters, and the flies were distributed to the officers of the various companies, each taking one. The fly was simply like a large, long sheet stretched over a pole with the sides and ends open, and until we were able to enclose them in the rear by a brush wall, they only protected us from above. The weather was cold, especially at night, and we all found it rather difficult to keep warm. There was plenty of wood in the vicinity, but for the most part it consisted of very large trees, which could not be easily cut up or made into firewood or material for houses with the tools we had. After a while we managed to cover the rear of our officers' quarters with brush and

to build large fires in front, which enabled us to live in tolerable comfort. When, however, it rained and the wind blew, these tents were not much protection.

On October 10th, the regiment was under marching orders all day. Stuart, the famous cavalry leader of the South, had started on his raid around the Army of the Potomac. He crossed the Potomac River a few miles above Williamsport, and with 2000 followers rode entirely around our army, recrossing at White's Ford below Harper's Ferry.[1]

General Pleasonton with our cavalry tried to overtake them, but was unable to do so, although in one day he rode eighty miles. Our orders to march were countermanded that same night, and during the next week we were drilled very energetically, having company drills in the morning, and battalion drills in the afternoon.

My diary states that the army was exceedingly well fed at this time. We had a company mess with a man hired to cook for us, and the bill of fare consisted of beefsteak, sweet soft bread, butter, battercakes, syrup, fried eggs, and potatoes, and sometimes apples and other fruit. In order to provide against the dangers of smallpox, the surgeons undertook at this time to vaccinate all who had not recently been vaccinated, and a large number of men in the Thirty-seventh were subjected to this ordeal, and some of them were made pretty sick by it.

In a letter dated October 17th written home, I find the following account of some of our camp experiences:

Captain Allen's boy and mine are quietly deciding who shall wash the dinner dishes by the toss of a penny. These

[1] See p. 51, footnote 2, relating to White's Ford.

boys are pretty tough specimens. They each have only one garment of a kind. When that gets dirty, they will take it off and wash it and either wait until it dries, or wear it and let it dry on them. It don't matter much which. My boy was running around naked yesterday while he washed his clothes and waited for them to dry, and as they did not dry fast enough to suit him, he concluded to put them on and dry them in that way. At this season he sleeps on the bare ground with anything or nothing over him as it happens. He is now only fourteen. I have one rubber blanket which I need to spread on the ground when I am on the march, or out on picket duty, and in order to provide a proper covering I have just purchased a rubber overcoat, which I can use also as a blanket and spread it over my woollen blanket to keep off the wet and the rain. It only weighs one pound. I was lucky in securing it. Although our sutler brought into camp a large number of them he disposed of them almost immediately.

On the 18th of October, after a hard day's work in drilling and in preparation for inspection of the next day, which was Sunday, at 6 P.M. we were ordered to pack up and march. We started and marched until midnight, reaching Clear Spring, at a distance of fifteen miles from where we started. We made a short stop at Williamsport for the purpose of being reinforced by a squadron of cavalry and a battery. The next morning (October 19th), after an early call and breakfast, we started at 7 o'clock and marched an additional fifteen miles with a halt of only two or three hours at midday, to Hancock, where we arrived at 4 P.M. This was a pretty hard march for an unseasoned regiment—thirty miles in less than twenty-four hours. Almost everybody was complaining of blistered feet and some of the men limped very badly. We were comforted

by the report that the Thirty-seventh had fewer stragglers in proportion to its numbers than any of the other regiments.

That night after a short rest at Hancock, Company F was detailed to perform picket duty, and in order to reach the ground, had to march two or three miles farther up the Potomac. Our picket line was along the bank of the Potomac in a picturesque, grandly beautiful country. We enjoyed the scenery and were stimulated by the mountain air, but it was very cold. We suffered a good deal from lack of proper protection against the weather. We were relieved from the picket line by Company E of our regiment, at four o'clock of the next afternoon (October 20th), and returned to camp near Hancock. With an abundant supply of firewood gathered from the surrounding forests, and thoroughly wearied with our long march and our night duty, we slept soundly that night, rested the next day, and retired early with the expectation of a good second night's rest. Just before midnight, however, the camp was aroused by orders to pack up and fall into line, and we marched the rest of the night, arriving at Cherry Run, ten miles below Hancock on the Potomac, in the morning (October 22d). By this time our rations had given out, but the train met us from Williamsport, and rations were immediately issued, and the troops breakfasted on the simple fare of the army—hard-tack and coffee. After two hours of rest we moved back a mile from the river and encamped.

We were in the midst of a good farming region, and one of our servants obtained a turkey from one of the farmers nearby and our mess feasted. Our camp was situated in a beautiful forest which was warm and peaceful in the protection it gave us from the wind and

cold. From the river bank half a mile distant, we overlooked a large area of country, which, however, seemed to be commanded by the heights on the southern banks. To be sure that no enemy occupied these heights, a detachment from the Second Rhode Island crossed over and reconnoitred the banks, but found no trace of a hostile force.

Thursday, October 23d, early in the morning, brought us marching orders, and after breakfast we started eastward, apparently bound for our old camp, but after proceeding a short distance we were halted by new orders, and with knapsacks packed, loaded with accoutrements, and with guns stacked, so as to be ready to fall in at a moment's notice, we waited until the middle of the afternoon. We were to have hundreds of such experiences in subsequent campaigns. These long and tedious waits under arms and loads in utter ignorance of what was the cause of the delay were exceedingly trying to the patience of officers and men, and particularly exhausting to the soldiers. There was never a march without more or less of it. On this occasion, after a long wait, we were allowed to return to our camp of the previous night, where we remained until Monday, October 27th.

Those four days were days of great discomfort because of rain, but we were to some extent protected by the forest in which we were encamped, and we were able to keep warm by building large fires. The men were without tents, everything they touched was wet, and their clothes were so soaked with moisture that they exhaled steam.

On the 27th, we received orders to return to Williamsport, which we reached about nightfall after a hard march over muddy roads and wet by occasional

showers. The next day was spent in getting rested and thoroughly dried. The air was full of rumors that the Army of the Potomac was going to move. The sick had been ordered into permanent hospitals. On October 29th, at 2 P.M., we left Williamsport, and after a march of five miles, reached our old camp near Downsville, where we slept once more under our flies.

This excursion to Hancock was probably undertaken in anticipation of further raids by General Stuart or other cavalry leaders into Pennsylvania. On October 10th, General Stuart with 2000 cavalrymen had crossed the Potomac above Williamsport, and repeated his feat of the previous June of going around the Army of the Potomac, and returning to Lee's army without the loss of a man.[1]

This raid differed from the former one because it was from start to finish on Northern soil, and besides living off the country, he was enabled to obtain fresh remounts for his entire cavalry force at the expense of his enemies. He started on October 10th, and recrossed the Potomac at White's Ford[2] below Harper's Ferry on October 13th. It was so profitable to the Southern army, and so disgraceful and aggravating to the North, that McClellan, after the horse was stolen, determined to fasten the barn door, and sent Couch's division on its hurried march to Hancock, and when the army was ready to move called us back.

Personally I derived much encouragement from my own experience in connection with this excursion. I

[1] See War Map 25 (6), showing route in detail.

[2] Swinton says Stuart "recrossed the Potomac below the mouth of the Monocacy" (*Army of the Potomac*, p. 226). The place referred to may be White's Ferry, which exactly fits this description. See p. 247, *infra*, and note.

bore the marching very well, and although I had been suffering with camp ailments more or less, both at Washington and at Downsville, the trouble all ended with me after the march to Hancock. The exposure and the hard work of the march thoroughly agreed with me, and from that time I steadily gained in strength and in health. My weight increased, and within six months I had gained over thirty pounds, and during the remainder of the season only on very rare occasions, and then very slightly, was I troubled with anything resembling a cold.

On Thursday, October 30th, our regiment was subjected to a thorough inspection, and during the afternoon we received orders to be ready to march at 4 o'clock the next morning. In pursuance of such orders, on the following day we started at early dawn, and marched twelve miles over rough roads and through a hilly region by way of Keedysville to Rohrersville, where we went into camp in a picturesque basin among the hills and mountains. Encamped on a side of this basin the Army of the Potomac with its bright campfires presented a particularly picturesque scene in the evening.

On Saturday, November 1st, we started at 5 A.M. and marched to Berlin on the Potomac,[1] where we arrived at 2 P.M. Here we were encouraged by the prospect of receiving our first pay for services as soldiers. The regiment was formed in line and mustered; the paymaster with the muster roll in his hands went to each company and called from the muster roll the name of each man to be paid. The muster rolls with his

[1] Six or seven miles east of Harper's Ferry. See War Map 27 (1), which shows all the places named on their line of march as far as White Plains, where they arrived November 6th.

memoranda upon them were then returned to the regimental officers and by them completed, and sent to Washington, and we were told that the regiment would probably be paid sometime within the next two weeks.

Our march to-day was through Compton's Gap[1] and over the South Mountain Pass near the scene of the battle of that name in which General Reno was killed on the 14th of last September. We had supper that night of bread, butter, and fried eggs. Eggs forty cents a dozen, butter forty-five cents a pound, chickens $1.50 a pair. Our camp in the vicinity of Berlin was quite near to General McClellan's headquarters.

On the next day, Sunday, after the usual inspection the men were allowed to make the most of their day of rest until the afternoon. I spent the day below Berlin between the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and the Potomac. We heard distant cannonading during the day. In the afternoon the quartermaster announced that he had just received a large supply of clothing for the soldiers, and was ready to partially fill the requisitions which we had sent in for needed articles while we were in camp at Downsville. With the cold weather rapidly coming on, and the prospect of an autumn or winter campaign before us, this announcement from the quartermaster was greedily welcomed, and the men were supplied with winter overcoats, which they especially needed, and with such other articles by way of renewals as their requisitions had called for.

On Monday, November 3d, the regiment was formed

[1] Apparently a mistake copied from his original letter home November 1, 1862, and not corrected. See War Map 27 (3) showing road from Rohrersville southeast must take them through Crampton's Gap, but not over the South Mountain Pass, which is five miles farther north, where General Reno was killed September 14, 1862. (See Ropes, ii., 344.)

in line at 9 A.M. with the expectation of crossing the Potomac on the pontoon bridge at once. After waiting four hours for the way to be clear, we took our turn, and at 1 P.M. were conscious of being once more on "the sacred soil of Virginia." The experience of crossing the stream on a pontoon bridge for the first time was a novelty, and of much interest to the members of the regiment. The men were cautioned against keeping step on the bridge, lest by the rhythm of their motion they should cause a sufficient swing of the bridge to break it from its moorings. Once upon the Virginia shore, they started off at a good gait, and by nightfall had marched thirteen miles, and went into camp in a piece of woods by the roadside, sufficiently weary and hungry to have a good appetite for supper, and to sleep soundly without waking until the next morning.

At 4 o'clock Tuesday (November 4th), reveille was sounded, and by 6 o'clock the men had breakfasted and were in line, but the road was blocked by artillery and other troops, and our progress was much delayed. That night, however, we halted after a march of twelve miles at or near a small village known as Union.

The country between the Potomac and the Rappahannock rivers in Virginia is intersected by numerous narrow and very poor roads, which are here and there crossed by small streams, and usually these streams are without bridges. The movement of an army through such a country and over such highways was a difficult undertaking, because the roads were hardly wide enough to allow the passing of the troops, the wagons, or the artillery, separately; and it took no little planning and ingenuity to move an army of a hundred thousand men with its trains of supplies and camp equipage through such roads and over so many

unbridged streams. If possible, the artillery and the wagons would be given the roads and the men marched through the lots or through the woods by the sides of the roads. The wagons and men crossing the streams would soon churn the river bottoms, and the opposite banks would become soaked with the water which was carried from the stream by the wheels of the wagons and by the feet of the men and horses for hundreds of yards beyond the farther banks. Virginia soil when wet makes an article of mud that is without a rival. If possible, in order to avoid creating such mud-holes, the engineers were called and temporary bridges built to accommodate the marching troops, but very frequently the men were compelled to wade through the streams and make their way as best they could through the muddy banks.

On November 5th, Wednesday, we began to see the marks of the skirmishes, artillery and cavalry fights, indicated by dead horses and here and there an exploded artillery caisson, as well as by marks of the bullets and shot upon the trees, and noted the tracks of the Rebels two days ahead of us all the way. On this day we only progressed five miles towards Ashby's Gap to a point a little beyond Upperville.

On Thursday, November 6th, we started at 6 A.M. and marched eighteen miles to White Plains, where, for the first time in Virginia, we encountered a railroad cut and dismantled track.[1] No cars had been run since June 1st. It was the coldest day we had yet experienced, and as we had not yet received our tents we were sleeping every night in the open air. The next morning (November 7th) we had our first snow-storm, and as no orders to march were received the men

[1] There is no mention in letters of tracks being dismantled.

devoted themselves to keeping warm. It so happened that we were out of rations, and during the day the report that there was a large and a well stocked farm in the near neighborhood led the men to organize parties, and to supply themselves with sheep and turkeys during that night. As a consequence the next day the army was well supplied with fresh mutton and fowls. Such raiding was forbidden, and usually the order was strictly enforced. But for some reason, which I never fully understood, on this occasion the disobedience of orders was overlooked, and no one was punished. I have always supposed that it was because everybody was hungry, and all officers and men had a taste of the mutton or the fowls.

We afterwards learned that by order of the President signed and dated November 5th, and delivered November 7th, General McClellan was relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac, and General Burnside appointed to take command. This probably accounts for the absence of movement by the Army of the Potomac on this day, and the next day, and on the 9th of November we only moved seven miles to New Baltimore,[1] where we went into camp.

On November 10th the troops were formed in lines, and the order relieving McClellan was promulgated. General McClellan and his staff, with Burnside following in the rear, rode bareheaded through the army from right to left. The air resounded with cheers, banners waved, and saluting swords and presented arms were all significant of the rare devotion and enthusiasm felt by the army for its commander. It was more like a triumph than a dismissal. No other commander of that army ever had to the same degree its enthusiastic

[1] See War Map 74 (1).

admiration and attachment. On that 10th of November the feeling in the army was unanimous in his favor, and against the authorities in Washington. They felt that he was a much wronged man, and had been treated very unfairly, and many of them verged on mutiny in expressing their sympathy with him, and devotion to him. But the sober second thought and sound sense of even those who were his strongest friends raised loyalty to country far above personal devotion to their leader. Burnside felt and acknowledged his own unfitness for the position. But the army fought with the same resolution and courage at Fredericksburg as at Antietam, although they did not meet with the same measure of success.

From the 11th to the 16th of November we remained at or near New Baltimore. Our camp was located on the top of a hill. All the water that we used had to be brought three quarters of a mile. Wood was scarce and small and the weather was raw, emphasized by bleak and chilly winds. Manassas Plain was visible for thirty miles. On the 11th, I had a call from Frank Walker. In a letter dated the 12th I wrote home: "I think I never saw such universal gloom as the removal of McClellan has caused over this army. I had never before in any degree appreciated the popularity of McClellan with his army. The army had never succeeded under any other commander. McClellan organized and made it what it is and the talk among the officers and men is almost mutinous. It makes me feel very blue. The first report was that McClellan was promoted to the command of all the armies. When they [the soldiers] found that he was removed instead of being promoted, there was a tremendous revulsion of feeling in his favor."

On Saturday evening, November 15th, we received orders to be ready to move in the morning, and pursuant to such orders the next morning saw us with baggage packed and in line ready for the march at an early hour. Our route lay through a wild and desolate country with very imperfect roads and almost no human habitations or cultivated lands. Here and there was a woodman's hut or a cabin in the midst of a small clearing. We passed no villages, no court-houses, schools, or churches, but at the end of the first day's march we were said to be near Catlett's Station.[1]

On Monday, November 17th, the country through which we passed was of much the same character. We wandered through the woods, across roads all day, apparently lost, so far as civilized or cultivated surroundings were concerned, and progressed so slowly that at the end of the day we found we had made only eight miles from our starting point.

On Tuesday, November 18th, we acted as guard for the wagon train, which is always a very exhausting service, and at night reached a temporary camp near Stafford Court-House. Our camp was located on low, wet ground, and to add to our misery we ran out of rations. On the evening of the 19th of November, while we were still in this camp, rain set in and our teams got stuck in the mud and required a detail of two hundred men from our regiment to help pull them out. The men were still without tents. If we stood still we sank in the mud. We awoke in the middle of the night to find that we were lying in pools of water. We tried

[1] Letter of November 19, 1862, says: "The first night we halted at Catlett's Station, or rather at Weaversville near there." See War Map 22, Plates 5 and 7. A large map of the whole country as far as Fredericksburg is shown in War Map 8.

to sleep, but could n't, and finally got up and devoted ourselves to getting dry, with only partial success.

On the 21st the trains arrived and whiskey rations were served to the men. On Saturday, the 22d of November, the rain ceased during the morning. I was sent out a half-mile from camp to guard the ammunition train. The weather was still threatening and raw. I got warm by boxing with Joe Taylor. On the following day, Sunday, November 23d, I was relieved from guard duty at 1 P.M., and returned to camp with my detail. We found that we were encamped on the highway from Aquia Creek Landing to Fredericksburg. The Chaplain held services at 2 P.M.—the first time for more than a month. The mail was then distributed, and I was made happy by the receipt of five letters. I also received a copy of the New York *Independent*, and during the afternoon entertained the boys of my company by reading one of Beecher's sermons which seemed to be much enjoyed.

On November 25th, the entire regiment was ordered out five miles from camp to do picket duty. On the 26th, Wednesday, we returned to camp in the afternoon, and during the evening were greatly rejoiced by the arrival of Mr. Birnie from Springfield with boxes and bundles from home for the regiment. I was lieutenant of the guard on that day, and it was part of my duty to receive those boxes and to take care of them until they could be distributed.

Thursday, November 27th, Thanksgiving Day. In the morning after religious services the battalion was formed in the shape of a hollow square, Colonel Edwards read the Governor's proclamation, and under my command the guards brought in and unpacked the boxes,

and Mr. Birnie distributed their contents to the various companies and individuals entitled.

My Thanksgiving dinner was hardtack and beefsteak, and for supper we had rice and hardtack, but it was a busy day, crowded with thoughts and memories of home. During the evening the knapsacks left by the regiment at Washington on September 30th, and which I had stored for the regiment, were returned and delivered to the men.

On November 29th, the paymaster arrived and commenced to pay the regiments in our brigade. The Thirty-seventh was not reached until November 30th, and I was passed on that day on account of my second lieutenancy in the Thirty-sixth.

To a certain extent we had by this time begun the erection of log cabins with large open fireplaces and barrels for chimneys. The older regiments of the army had learned to make them during the previous winter, and we very soon copied the example, and to a certain extent were sheltered in such houses. The men in the ranks had to use their rubber blankets for coverings of the roofs, because as yet we had not received our tents, and in this respect the officers were not much better off than the men. The difference was in the fact that they had more rubber blankets.

The paymaster finished his task of paying the regiments of our brigade on the 2d day of December. During our money famine, which to this time had been continuous, our sutler's tent looked like a deserted house. With the advent of the paymaster, wagons loaded with all kinds of temptation for the officers and men seemed to come out of the woods in every direction. During the periods intervening between the paymaster's visits, orders on the paymaster were given by the soldiers,

and taken by the sutler in payment for his wares to a moderate extent. At these times he did not suggest purchases by display of goods, but when they had cash in their pockets, his tent was a department store.

On December 3d, Colonel Edwards invited Captain Allen and me to accompany him in a call upon General Devens. The General received us very cordially. I was particularly impressed with the clearness and deliberation with which he expressed his opinions. He was a good specimen of a sturdy New Englander.

On December 4th, we received orders to march, after the companies which were detailed for picket duty had returned to camp. We started at 10 A.M., but made slow progress owing to the narrowness of the road and its occupation by teams. Evening found us in the vicinity of Belle Plain after a march of ten miles, where we bivouacked for the night in a forest where wood and water were plenty. The next morning (December 5th), we started at 6, and after marching six miles went into camp at 11 o'clock, in the vicinity of King George's County Court-House,[1] in an oak forest which in its location and surroundings seemed well adapted for a winter camp. An envious fate refused to let us enjoy it. After a two hours' stay we started again in the rain, moved a mile, and went into camp on a hillside covered with a growth of young pines unfit for fuel, and yet there was no other at hand. We tried to build fires,

[1] This is probably an error based on letter of December 6th dated "Camp near King George Court-House," which was corrected in his next letter dated "Camp near White Oak Church, December 9, 1862," where he explains, "The last time I wrote I dated my letter from another place because I did not know exactly where we were. I have however since found out and date accordingly." As King George C. H. was many miles out of their course, the camp on December 5th was more probably near White Oak Church. See War Map 100 (1).

but the fuel would not burn, while it filled the air with a pungent smoke that was painful to the eyes and disagreeable to breathe. It rained all day, finally changing into a cold, dismal snow-storm, which cleared off in the night, and this was followed by several days of bitterly cold weather, during which the only way we could keep warm was by exercise. We found a distant piece of woods where we cut down the trees and made them into four-foot logs, which the soldiers would carry on their shoulders a half-mile or more to feed their fires to keep them warm. We stayed in this uncomfortable camp until December 11th. It was appropriately named by the soldiers "Camp Misery on Smoky Hill."

During that winter I became quite expert in the use of an axe. I felled trees and cut and split them into logs and fuel lengths, and thus got warmth and exercise during the period when we were without tents or huts.

On Thursday, December 11th, we were aroused at 3.30, left camp at 5 A.M., and after a rapid march, arrived at 11 o'clock at a point on the north bank of the Rappahannock River near Franklin's Crossing. We filed into a depressed meadow between two hills and stacked arms, and the men took off their knapsacks and waited.

Two pontoon bridges were being built at Franklin's Crossing,[1] and to Devens's brigade was assigned the honor of leading the way across the river. The Second Rhode Island was selected to cross on the upper bridge, while the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts was to cross at the same time on the lower bridge, and they were to be followed by the left grand division, consisting of the First and Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac

[1] See War Map 33 (1). The location of the pontoons is shown on Map 63 (7).

under the command of General Franklin. Meanwhile, in front of Fredericksburg, General Burnside had been engaged from early morning in an abortive attempt to build two other pontoons, with the result that Rebel sharpshooters occupying the basements of the buildings upon the opposite banks in defiance of all the artillery that he could train upon these buildings shot the pontooners as fast as they appeared to build the bridges.

While my regiment was waiting in the meadow I ascended a neighboring hill and watched the bombardment of the city. The Federal guns were pouring shot and shell into the city with apparent effect, but the moment bridge building was renewed the deadly bullets flew. Later in the day a number of pontoons were launched and selected soldiers sprang into them and were rowed across the river and they drove out the sharpshooters from their hiding places, and occupied the streets in that part of the city until the bridges were laid.

At about 5 P.M., the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts and Second Rhode Island simultaneously started across the bridges at Franklin's Crossing. General Devens and Colonel Edwards led the way on the lower bridge, closely followed by Company F of the Thirty-seventh. The Second Rhode Island deployed a skirmish line on reaching the farther bank. The coast had been cleared by a searching artillery fire, and the bend of the river selected for the bridges was favorable to the control of the farther shore from our side. The result was that the crossing was not opposed, and in a very short time we were in line upon the plain,—a division strong. Then the powers in control decided to trust the keeping of the south bank at that point to the unaided posses-

sion of Devens's brigade, and the other brigades of the division were withdrawn for the night to the north bank. It was bitterly cold, and we could have no fires, and our position in line did not allow of much motion. We found an enormous pile of straw near by, and the men wrapped it around their feet and took turns in lying down upon it or in it. But it was a weary night, and Jackson's corps was in our front. What rest we got was with arms in hand. Morning finally came and was never more welcome.

Friday, December 12th, was devoted to getting the Army of the Potomac across the river and into position on its south side. It was a very awkward field on which to fight a battle. In our front was a wooded ridge rising one or two hundred feet, which bends away from the river and leaves a wide and fertile plain at the point where we were; while farther north and back of the city of Fredericksburg, the slope was gradual from the city's edge to the foot of a high terrace. This terrace was surmounted by sightly residences, and at its base, skirting it for a long distance, was a sunken road with a solid stone wall, which here and there protected the road from attack and hid it from sight of those approaching the city. Between the city and the plain where Franklin's left grand division was deployed ran two considerable streams, one of them named Deep Run, and the other Hazel Run. The latter was called fordable, the former was not. The practical effect of this was to divide our forces into two armies. Sumner's right grand division, with four divisions from Hooker's centre grand division, was to assault the heights back of the city, and Franklin's left grand division, with Hooker's two other divisions, was to attack the fortified hills opposite the plains below the city. While the armies

were getting into position on the 12th we rested, and watched the long lines file across the river and take their places on the plain.

About 11 A.M., on December 13th, the fighting began in earnest. On the right Sumner struggled all day long to drive the Rebels from the sunken road, but his heroic endeavors were unable to effect a lodgment, and at night his losses numbered toward 9000 men, with very little to show in return, save the honor of having faithfully tried to accomplish the impossible.

On the left, near noon, the First Corps of Franklin's army, assisted by two divisions of the Third Corps, made a fruitless attempt to seize or break through Jackson's line with a loss of 4000 men. The Sixth Corps, with Newton's division in reserve, formed the right of Franklin's army.[1] They lost some men on the skirmish line and listened to the whistle of the bullets and the scream of the shells over their heads for two or three hours. At length, about 3 P.M., our (Newton's) division was formed in line, and we were double-quicked to the left about a mile, where we lay closely hugging the ground amid the furrows of a last year's cornfield, while shot and shell at intervals during two hours shrieked and tore through the air just over our prostrate bodies. We were in the second or third line of battle, and once were ordered forward, but for some reason the order was countermanded before we had proceeded far. After dark we were withdrawn to the rear about a mile, and passed the night in comparative quiet with a fair amount of sleep.

[1] Newton's division was the Third, of which the Second Brigade, Brigadier-General Charles Devens, Jr., commanding, comprised the Seventh, Tenth, Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, Thirty-sixth New York, and Second Rhode Island (O. R., xxi., pp. 59, 60).

On Sunday, December 14th, we remained all day where we bivouacked the previous evening. Our principal occupation was watching the troops cross the river and go to the front. A feeling of gloom pervaded the army; but we knew nothing of the particulars of the battle already fought. In the evening there was a general disposition to sing hymns. The movement started and spread through the part of the army where we were encamped.

On Monday, December 15th, we were aroused at 2 A.M., and at 4 we moved forward and supported a New Jersey battery near the Richmond Road, and were there all day. After dark the troops were withdrawn and recrossed the Rappahannock. I was detailed to take charge of the "alarm picket." We were stationed in front of the line occupied by our troops. At 11 P.M., I was recalled and with my detail rejoined my regiment, and with the brigade we stood in line while the balance of the grand division marched through us and across the river. About 2 A.M. of the 16th of December, our brigade recrossed; the Thirty-seventh being the last to cross on one of the bridges. The engineers then took up the bridges and the pickets were brought over in the boats.[1]

[1] In a letter dated "Left Bank of the Rappahannock, 8 A.M. Wednesday, December 17th, 1862," he wrote to his parents an account of this Sunday and Monday: "We spent a very quiet Sunday. . . . In the afternoon I read. . . . In the evening I went down with the captain to hear him and one or two of the singers of the regiment sing for awhile. Captain has great taste for music, and a very nice voice, and it is a great pleasure to hear him sing with our other amateurs, among whom we number some superb singers. . . . We retired about ten o'clock and then were awakened at two in the morning . . . and at four were on the move to the front, where we arrived about five, and arranged ourselves so as to support the batteries on our line of battle. We lay there all day without anything of importance occurring, except in the afternoon it was

General Newton, in his official report, says: "My obligations are due to all according to their opportunities, but especially to Brigadier-General Charles Devens, who commanded the advance and rear guard in the crossing and recrossing of the river. . . . The division was never seriously engaged, but manifested a becoming readiness for action, and great fortitude and steadiness under the shelling of the enemy."[1]

The Thirty-seventh had one man killed, and one man wounded, in this, its baptismal battle.[2]

Rain set in before midnight, and added much to the gloom of the occasion. After crossing the river, we marched a mile to the rear and slept in a drenching rain the rest of the night.

It took us several days to recover the full possession of our faculties, and an unusual number from the regi-

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discovered that the rebels were attempting to entrench about a mile to the front in a piece of woods.

"We shelled them immediately, and they skedaddled quick, a whole regiment of them, I should say. After shelling about a half an hour, we resumed our quiet again, and lay there until evening, when I was sent with some dozen men from our right wing as an alarm picket. So I went to my work supposing I had an all night's job before me, but about eleven o'clock I was ordered to draw in my pickets as quietly as possible. I was so astonished that I hardly knew what to do, but I obeyed, and on returning found the regiment drawn up ready for a move, where, I then knew not, but we quietly moved away first to our left, so that I had an idea for the moment that we were merely going to take a position farther to the left, but I was soon undeceived by the turning of the regiment to the rear again. So back we went to the river's bank and drew up in line of battle until all the other divisions and brigades had passed, and then our regiment crossed while the rest of the brigade waited for the drawing in of the outer line of pickets. So we were the first to cross, and almost the last to recross (our brigade was the last.)

"We then came up here about half a mile or a mile, and encamped. But we had run almost all the way clear from the front, and were decidedly tired when we halted for the night about 3 o'clock A.M., and then

[1] O. R. vol. xxi., p. 535.

[2] O. R., vol. xxi., p. 142.

ment went to the hospital. We moved camp once or twice, and the greater part of our time and energy was absorbed in procuring fuel and keeping the fires burning. Drilling was resumed on December 22d, and on the 23d Rev. Mr. Cooke appeared in camp as the bearer of Christmas cheer to the boys of the Thirty-seventh, although his boxes did not arrive until January 5th, and meanwhile, Mr. Cooke had to return to Washington with our regimental quartermaster to assist him in securing transportation for his boxes.

My only diversion, beyond ordinary camp life, that I enjoyed on Christmas Day was due to a call from Frank Walker, who dropped in to see me in the afternoon, and I subsequently learned that my father left home on that afternoon, and after a brief stay in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, in each

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we slept in a drenching rain until the morning. Yesterday we pitched our tents again and are now waiting further orders. Such is the part we acted in the famous passage of the Rappahannock. I little expected to get out of it with so little harm, only one killed and two wounded. . . .

"I saw a good deal of the battle, and heard more of it, and I don't think the rebels drove us at any one point, certainly on the left. But their front line of batteries was certainly very strong and nobody knew what they had to the rear. We however hear it reported that in the balloon reconnoissance made by General Burnside their line of battalions to the rear was found to be perfectly impregnable, and we knew that if we stayed there another day we should be shelled most terrifically, and so our generals thought it best to retire. It was, I think, however, a disheartening step to the troops, they looked upon it as bad as defeat. It is reported that General Newton, the commander of our division, was so chagrined that he told General Franklin that he would take his division and go to the top of those hills in spite of everything, and hold them too! We rather expected to move down the river the same night to effect a flank movement, but our generals did not see fit, and where we are going next I am sure I don't know, although I should like to very well. I however have gained one thing. I have seen the Rebs, and seen a battle, and almost been in it. Indeed, some of the old regiments told us when we lay up in the left Saturday afternoon and evening that they never had been under severer shelling than that was."

of which cities he called on friends, he arrived in camp on January 2d. I spent New Year's Day and the three succeeding days on picket. Our picket line extended from Pollock's mill on the left, to a point on the river bank near where our pontoon bridges were laid in December.

On board the boat from Washington to Aquia Creek, father made the acquaintance of General Shaler, and he kindly escorted him to our camp. It was very aggravating to me to be on duty at that time, but father improved the time by calling on General Caldwell, Colonel Frank Walker, and Colonel Clark, and I returned to camp on the 4th, and enjoyed three happy days of visiting with him. On the afternoon of the 5th of January, Mr. Cooke returned from Washington with our Christmas boxes, and we feasted on home dainties for several days. All my home neighbors had contributed to my box, and it was rich in cake, preserved meats, fruits, pickles, and a large number of articles made by the ladies intended for my comfort in camp.

On January 7th, father and Mr. Cooke left for home, and we settled down to the dull routine of camp life. Meanwhile, our shelter tents had arrived, greatly to the joy of the whole regiment. The weather was too unsettled to allow our drilling with much regularity. Our camp was poorly situated on rather low ground, and the feeling was pretty general in the regiment that much of the prevailing sickness was due to this fact.

On January 16th, Lieutenant-Colonel Goodrich was discharged from the service by the acceptance of his resignation as lieutenant-colonel. The experience that he had had in the campaign convinced him that he was too old to bear the privations and hardships incident to that life. This produced a vacancy, and Major Mon-

tague was recommended immediately for promotion, and Captain Allen of Company F was recommended to take the vacancy created by Colonel Montague's promotion. General Devens insisted upon his right of examining the candidates for promotion before their names were sent forward to Governor Andrew, and with one or two other first lieutenants, whose names were suggested by Colonel Edwards, I was directed to appear before General Devens for such examination. With the experience that I had already had, I felt that I was equal to the exposures and hardships of field service. After submitting to the examination required by General Devens I was very happy to receive his recommendation for my promotion to the captaincy of my own company, which I accordingly received.

Forty-three years afterwards on the occasion of the dedication of the monument erected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the city of Worcester to the memory of General Devens, and dedicated on the 4th of July of that year, it was my privilege to command the survivors of General Devens's old brigade, who were present to participate in the dedicatory exercises. It brought very vividly to mind my slight acquaintance with him, and in particular the courteous and cordial way in which he treated me on the occasion in January, 1863, when I appeared before him as a candidate for promotion to the captaincy of Company F in the Thirty-seventh.

On January 19th we were ordered out on picket duty, and on the 20th were, suddenly and unexpectedly to us, recalled to camp to join the movement inaugurated on that day by General Burnside, and which in history is known as "The Mud Campaign." We started about noon. The skies and the atmosphere portended as

favorable conditions as we could possibly have desired if Providence had given us the ordering. The air was balmy and the sun shone bright. We marched up the river seven miles, and about 5 P.M. halted in a beautiful piece of pine woods. As we lighted our evening fires in the forest the scene was worthy of the fairies, and as we knew very little of our destination there was no disposition to doubt or to fear. Before midnight the rain set in and increased in amount all night. By morning it was a flood. The ground on which we slept was soaked, and our rubber blankets and coats did not protect us from the pelting storm. Our start had been so unexpected that very little provision had been made for the march, so we had hardtack, but very little else.

They attempted to move us across lots so as not to interfere with the movement of the teams and our artillery. We started early in the morning, but by ten o'clock we found that the roads were full of wagons, artillery and pontoons which were stuck in the mud and could not be moved, while the army moving by the side of the roads was gradually churning the soil into sloughs which were growing deeper and deeper and threatening to engulf us. Finally, after we had advanced only two or three miles, we filed into a woods and details were made of the men to help pull the wheeled conveyances of the army out of the mire. At this we made very little progress. They seemed to be sinking deeper and deeper, and the rain showed little inclination to cease. Sixteen horses could not move one pontoon with men to help. We went into camp near the river, and established a picket line. While the Confederates laughed and jeered at us, our only resource was to build fires and try to get dry and wait for the storm to subside. The men were soaked, and as an

antidote whiskey rations were issued, and as the soldiers had eaten a very light breakfast, the whiskey was effective enough to make many of them very drowsy.

I was actually soaked to my knees and plastered with mud above my hips. During the afternoon the rain lessened in quantity. We built huge fires and dried ourselves as well as we could, and then lay down in our camp clothes and slept most peacefully. The next day (22d) we got thoroughly dried, and on January 23d, under marching orders at daybreak—destination unknown,—we started, faced towards our old camp, and after plodding for many miles through woods and fields for the purpose of avoiding the muddy roads, we reached there at 2 P.M. to find that in our absence it had been pilfered and sacked; but the huts were there, and in our disconsolate condition we welcomed them as if they were homes.

Burnside was relieved from the command of the army, and the ever hopeful soldiers girded themselves for further struggles.

CHAPTER V

THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC UNDER GENERAL HOOKER

JANUARY 26 TO JUNE 27, 1863

ONCE more the War Department and the President were called upon to select a commander for the Army of the Potomac. Stanton was at the head of the War Department. He was an excellent man to watch over the expenses, but he had neither military education nor experience. Halleck was still acting as adviser, but he was only a theorist. General Scott had retired. McDowell had failed at Bull Run. McClellan was an excellent organizer and engineer, but too slow to compete with Lee and Jackson in the field. Banks, Sigel, and Pope had been slaughtered in quick succession by Jackson. Burnside had proved the worst failure of all. The question was who next should be tried, and the lot fell upon General Hooker.

Hooker had proved himself brave and aggressive as a division and a corps commander at Williamsburg and Antietam, but he was suspected of disloyalty to his chief at Fredericksburg. In the military and political councils at Washington, his chief backer was Secretary Chase, while all the rest of the Presidential Cabinet, and the corps commanders in the Army of the Potomac, pronounced him incapable of the task devolving upon

the commander of the Army of the Potomac at this juncture. No one else was in sight, and President Lincoln finally wrote him a stinging letter of reproach for his faults in the past, and appointed him commander of the Army of the Potomac.[1] Meanwhile, the Army of Northern Virginia, under Lee and his able subordinates, was educating a body of corps, division, and brigade commanders, who, already possessed of natural aptitude and experience, were making of that army a unified force that could be handled with consummate skill by its great leader, General Robert E. Lee. The commander-in-chief understood his corps commanders, who in turn were as thoroughly and ably sustained and re-enforced by their division, brigade, and regimental commanders as any who ever took the field. In the Army of the Potomac these elements had constantly changed, while in the Army of Northern Virginia, they had been educated into unified and co-operating forces. In the Army of the Potomac distinguished officers were few. In the Army of Northern Virginia they were legion.

At the time General Hooker was made the commander of the Army of the Potomac, General Sedgwick was assigned to the command of the Sixth Corps. His name is more thoroughly identified with that of the Sixth Corps than the name of any other officer. He had had a large experience in army life, was brave to a fault, decided in his views, cautious and judicious in his leadership, and he particularly endeared himself to the soldiers of his command by his tender and considerate care for their lives and for their comfort.

General Hooker took command of the army on the 26th day of January, 1863, and immediately went to

[1] *Complete Works*, Nicolay and Hay, vol. ii., p. 306.

work to reorganize the army and to bind it into an efficient whole. He reorganized the cavalry and the artillery; trained and drilled them into much more efficient bodies than they had ever been before. The organization into three grand divisions he abandoned, strengthened the corps organizations, and adopted emblems for each corps and department of the army to be worn by the soldiers in a prominent position upon their caps, and thereby show at a glance to what part of the service they belonged, as well as to what corps, division, or brigade. He saw that the army was well clothed and well fed, and encouraged it, by giving each man or officer a furlough or leave of absence for ten or fifteen days, to return home and get a new supply of health and courage.[1]

[1] In letter dated "White Oak Church, February 2, 1863," M. W. T. wrote: "They are going to give furloughs to one private in each company and to two line officers and one staff officer, of ten days' duration each, and I have been settling who should go in my company by lot this afternoon. . . . Married men have the preference in these furloughs, so that my chances are small. . . ."

The following interesting glimpse behind the scenes of the great conflict at this time is contained in the same letter: "I have just returned from a three days' picket tour. . . . This is the pleasantest tour of picket we have enjoyed yet. I had something of a chance to communicate with the Rebs this time, and improved it by talking with them across the river some ten minutes twice. We found the Forty-eighth Alabama regiment doing picket on the opposite side of the river, and a very polite, affable young man came down and conversed with several of us officers. He asked us what we thought of peace over on this side, said they wanted it much. I asked them if they were willing to come back into the Union, he said he was willing to, but he did not suppose their side were. He said they had plenty of rations of flour and such, but no tea or coffee. They wanted very much to get hold of our papers and of their own accord every day sent over their Richmond dailies. They came over one day of their own accord and played euchre with some of the regiment above us, and were very anxious to trade tobacco and sugar for coffee, etc. They were very polite indeed, and before our departure to-day they announced the sinking of our iron-clads in Charles-

Inspections were frequent, discipline was strict, and the army was subjected to constant and severe drills and exercises by regiments, brigades, and divisions. The numbers and strength of the regiments were also reinforced by recruits and by compelling the soldiers that were detailed for special duties to return and take their places in the ranks. In fact, the whole army was impressed with the feeling that strength, energy, and intelligence were all working together at headquarters and producing lasting results in the line of efficiency.

The Thirty-seventh at first returned to the camp which they had occupied just before their departure on the "Mud Campaign," but after remaining there a month, a new camp was selected by Colonel Edwards, laid out, and built upon well-devised and improved plans. Early in March we moved into it, and under the influence of the generally improved conditions our camp was put into better shape than any camp we had previously occupied. It was ornamented with arches and evergreen bowers and attractive enclosures. The huts and streets were constantly cleaned and every attention was paid to the health of the men and the care of the camp. During the spring, Captain Lincoln and I had frequent opportunities of seeing soldiers from Amherst in other regiments, and called now at the Second Corps on General Walker and General Caldwell,

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ton Harbor, and the opening of the port. Whether this is true or not we are as yet in the dark, but hope it may prove a canard. I hear that Hooker has issued most stringent orders against having any communication with the Reb pickets. So that I suppose in the future we shall be unable to either receive or give papers, and shall have to live in the dark. I felt some inclination to go over and talk with them awhile, as they invited us to, but thought it would be running too much risk, as we had orders not to communicate with them, even through papers, and they said they had the same."

and now at the Fifth Corps on Captain Shepard of the Class of 1860, Amherst College, and again at the Ninth Corps on our friends of the Twenty-first Massachusetts who enlisted with Colonel Clark.

Among the other luxuries that were provided under General Hooker's direction was soft bread for the whole army, which was baked in brick ovens erected especially for that purpose, and which, with the abundance of vegetables and fresh meat, also provided by his orders, made us think that we were living in great luxury. During the latter part of February the good people of Amherst and vicinity provided us with a fresh box of dainties, which were very gratefully received and appreciated. By the latter part of February, under the fuel requirements of so many men, the whole country in the neighborhood of the army was pretty thoroughly cleared of everything in the shape of wood, and the result was that the army teams were kept busy going to distant points with details and bringing in supplies of wood for the use of the different regiments. Stumps were visible here and there, but the forest had all disappeared as far as the eye could see.

During the latter part of March it became my turn to go on leave of absence. Captain Lincoln and I arranged so that we could be in Amherst together part of our time, and it so happened that our classmate Vance had just been promoted from captaincy to a majority in an Indiana regiment, and we three met in Amherst and spent a very pleasant ten days.

Of course, we were entertained and lionized as the returning soldiers were at that time. We were full of hope and the buoyancy of youth, and we did not allow the shadows of our adversities or the prospect of the hard campaign for which we were preparing, to render

us otherwise than cheerful and happy. We had a delightful vacation crowded with many pleasures, and when the time for our return arrived we bade our families and friends a cheerful good-by and started for the front. The train on which I started from New York to Philadelphia met with an accident which delayed me some four or five hours.

When I reached Philadelphia I was troubled with a toothache, and concluded to stop over and obtain the services of a dentist, which I accordingly did with the aid of my college friend, Horace Binny, 3d. This delayed me for one afternoon. At midnight I again started for Washington, but arrived there just too late to take the Aquia Creek boat for that day, and consequently was obliged to remain in Washington until the morrow.

However, I reached camp at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of April 6th.[1] I found that the army was preparing for a grand review to be held on the next day, before the President of the United States. This review was on a grander scale than any military pageant in which we had previously participated. Four corps were reviewed and the Sixth Corps was in the lead. No pains were spared by the commander-in-chief to make

[1] An incident of the camp life at this time is found in a letter to his mother of this date: "When I arrived this afternoon I found the officers with Colonel Edwards at their head all out playing ball. Games are all the rage now in the Army of the Potomac." And again on the 10th of the same month: "To-day the sun shines very bright and the air is beautifully clear and the wind is fast drying up the mud. Our camp is alive with ball-players, almost every street having its game. My boy Jimmie is so busy playing that he hardly knows how to stop to do my errands. He can play ball with the best of them, and pitching quoits he can beat anybody in my company, captain and all. . . . General Sedgwick was over here yesterday looking through our camp, and said it was the best he had seen."

SAMUEL C. VANCE.

RUFUS P. LINCOLN.

MASON W. TYLER.

From a tintype taken probably during their furlough in Amherst, in March, 1863.

it a perfect success. The different corps got into line without delay and they succeeded each other in their march before the reviewing stand with rapidity and regularity. The generals and their staffs, equipped in their fine regalia, blazing with gilt and gold, were in constant motion all over the field. Cannons fired a salute, and the President, followed by General Hooker and his staff, rode down the line. We saluted, and the President tried to manage his tall hat and make it do duty by way of returning the salute, and considering his awkwardness, he succeeded fairly well. We started at 7.30 in the morning, and returning reached our camp about 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Such reviews well and successfully conducted are very inspiring to the soldiers, and on this occasion every man and officer seemed to feel, as we never had felt before, that we had grown to be a fine army, and that we were bound to give a good account of ourselves. I never knew the Army of the Potomac to be so inspired with confidence in its future as it was at this time. Furloughs and leaves of absence now ceased, and every available man was called back to join his command.[1]

[1] In a letter dated "White Oak Church, Va., April 14, 1863," he wrote: "The enthusiasm of the troops is very high at the present time, and all hands agree in declaring that the army was never in so fine a condition before, not even when we went on to the Peninsula with full ranks. The cavalry marched Monday, and the artillery followed yesterday. Zenas Bliss dropped in suddenly upon us Monday. He is reporting for the *Boston Journal* just at present, and of course is looking out for a fight. He stayed with me last night. . . ."

April 19, 1863, he wrote: "Zenas Bliss came back night before last and spent the night and part of the day yesterday with me. The day before that he spent at General Hooker's headquarters, and took supper, spending the evening in company with Senator Wilson and General Joe, sleeping that night in the bed occupied by President Lincoln when here, and remaining for breakfast. He told me a good many things that he heard General Hooker say, although he was pretty close-mouthed, and

On April 14th orders were issued to furnish eight days' rations in the haversacks of the army, with sixty rounds of ammunition to each man, and everything not absolutely needed upon the march was sent to the rear. It looked like an immediate move, but one of those hard Virginia rains set in that night which soaked the ground and made it impossible for the army to move for at least ten days, unless they wished to repeat the experience of the Burnside "Mud Campaign." We therefore returned to our drills and work of preparation.

During the spring the commanders of the different regiments had been directed to hold classes of instruction for their officers, and each regimental headquarters was more or less of a school of military science. While we were waiting for the waters to dry up and the roads to settle, on the 21st of April General Devens announced that he had been promoted to the command of a division in the Eleventh Corps, and in a brief address of farewell to his old brigade, his eloquence drew tears to the eyes of his comrades. In fact, I doubt if there was a dry eye in the brigade when he announced his farewell. He was succeeded in the command by Colonel William H. Brown of the Thirty-sixth New York. A succession of rainy days held us

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did not like to tell all he knew. He says General Hooker remarked that he expected the eight days' rations the soldiers now have would carry them to Richmond. He knew to a man how many soldiers the Rebs had opposed to him. His plans had been deranged somewhat by the rain of the past week, and his cavalry was somewhat disorganized by losing horses by drowning, all which might have been saved had the commanders exercised discretion. The greatest difficulty he experienced was in finding subordinates that would exercise proper discretion and were equal to every emergency. This and a lot more he told me of 'Fighting Joe.' All seemed to him very fine, and he left impressed with the power of the man."

fast until the 27th of April. Meanwhile, the whole army had been held in readiness to move as soon as the weather conditions were favorable.[1]

By feigning that he intended to cross the Rappahannock at Port Royal ten miles below Fredericksburg and to attack Lee's army on its right flank, by a masterly secret movement over blind and wooded roads at a distance from the river, Hooker, between the 27th of April and the 2d of May, succeeded in transferring all of his army, excepting the Sixth Corps and Gibbon's division of the Second Corps, around Lee's left wing, and in locating it in the vicinity of Chancellorsville. This gave him control of the United States Ford some thirteen miles above Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock. He had intended to post his army a few miles farther down the river and give it the control of Banks's Ford, which was only six miles from Fredericksburg. This would have brought him within supporting distance of the Sixth Corps and practically united his army. Just as this part of the plan was about to be realized by the advance of his troops within sight of Banks's Ford, a strange and unaccountable lack of resolution took possession of General Hooker, and in spite of the protests of his corps commanders and his staff, he insisted upon withdrawing his army to Chancellorsville and fighting a defensive battle there. This practically prevented him from using his artillery and tied the feet of the left wing of his army, so that they could neither attack in their front, nor move to the assistance of the rest of the army on the right, because they were shut up in an almost impenetrable jungle, which prevented a move by that part of his force.

[1] A comprehensive map of the campaign which follows will be found in War Map 41 (1).

General Lee with an army of 58,000 men saw that his adversary was in a net, and disposed his force so as to hold him there with 30,000 men while he sent Jackson with the remainder of his army, amounting to 26,000 men, by a long detour around the right flank of the Army of the Potomac in an endeavor to cut that army off from its line of retreat over the United States Ford. He succeeded in crushing the right wing of the Army of the Potomac, consisting of the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, and producing such disorder and confusion in the arrangement of its lines of battle that it was practically paralyzed as an army.

Stonewall Jackson was killed just as he was organizing his troops in one last desperate attempt to seize the United States Ford and cut off the only line open for the retreat of the Federal army. Hooker was stunned. His Third Corps was miles away in the woods. His cavalry was half-way to Richmond. His left wing was snarled up in that terrible Wilderness which a year later came so near to being the burial-place of Grant and his army. He had 37,000 men in his army that never fired a shot, and yet when Stonewall Jackson crushed his right wing on that fateful night of the 2d of May, he had no available reserve at hand. All that saved him was the confusion that prevailed in Jackson's charging column. It was the same thing that saved Lee a year later at Spottsylvania. The charging columns in each case had to halt and re-form their lines. This gave time for a rally. At Chancellorsville, night too intervened.

At this juncture, at 9 P.M. (May 2d), Hooker issued a hurry call to Sedgwick, who was thirteen miles away, three miles below Fredericksburg. At this time Early held the heights back of Fredericksburg with six

brigades, or a total of nine thousand men. Hooker ordered Sedgwick to march three miles to Fredericksburg, carry the heights, capture or drive away Early, march ten miles, and at daylight attack Lee's army in the rear and relieve the pressure of Lee's army on that of Hooker. As the despatch was not dated until 9 o'clock in the evening, and the messenger bearing it had to pursue a circuitous route by the north bank of the river to reach Sedgwick, it was near midnight when he received his orders. It was an ablebodied proposition, but Sedgwick tackled it without a murmur. Soon after midnight he was under way groping through the darkness. It was a blind, tedious march through roads lined by woods and over two unbridged streams, but by a favoring fortune, we reached the rear of Fredericksburg between three and four o'clock of that Sunday morning, and waited for the dawn. As we approached the city, we startled a few weary pickets, but they got away in the darkness.

At daylight the Rebel batteries from Marye's and the neighboring heights opened on us, but they found difficulty in depressing their guns enough to do us any injury, and as we were on the outskirts of the city, they could not fire on us without damaging the city. About 10 o'clock we moved into a railroad cut half-way between the edge of the city and the sunken road at the foot of the terrace of Marye's Heights. Here we were pretty well protected from the Rebel fire; but a little in front of us was the sunken road at the foot of Marye's Heights which, in the previous December, was held by a mere handful of men against all the forces that General Burnside could bring into line against it; and on the other side of the road, Marye's Heights, surmounted by a fortified redoubt, bristling with cannon, and occupied

by Confederate riflemen, rose defiantly, and seemed to be ready to welcome us to hospitable graves. After two abortive attempts (one by Gibbon on the right, and the other by Howe on the left of our line) to carry the heights, General Sedgwick organized five columns of assault: three under the direction of General Howe, and commanded, respectively, by General Neil, Colonel Grant, and Colonel Seaver, to capture Lee and Cemetery Hills, and starting from the banks of Hazel Creek; and the other two under the direction of General Newton, and commanded, respectively, by Colonels Johns and Spear, to capture Marye's Heights, and starting from the southern edge of the city. Colonel Johns's column consisted of the Seventh Masachusetts and Thirty-sixth New York in the front line, supported by four regiments of Colonel Burnham's Light Division of the Sixth Corps; while Colonel Spear's column consisted of the Sixty-first Pennsylvania and Forty-third New York, supported by Colonel Shaler's brigade.[1]

All five columns were successful in capturing the works they attacked, and were closely followed by the rest of the corps. They lost a thousand men, but they captured more than a thousand prisoners, and the force that carried the "sunken road" at the point of the bayonet, and then poured over Marye's Heights, was led by two regiments of our brigade. Colonel Johns was seriously wounded, and Colonel Spear was killed. The Thirty-seventh reached the summit of the hill just in time to see the surrender and to aid in some of the captures. But the larger part of Early's forces succeeded in making their escape, and were in the fight against us at Salem Heights that afternoon.

It was now 11.30 o'clock, and messengers were

[1] O. R., vol. xxv., pt. 1, p. 559.

immediately despatched by Early to General Lee announcing the capture of Fredericksburg heights by the Sixth Corps. Lee at once called a halt in his attacks upon Hooker and sent McLaws's division with one brigade of Anderson's division to assist Early in staying Sedgwick's advance. Meanwhile, Sedgwick had spent nearly two hours in assembling his corps and resuming his march. Brooks's (First) Division was in advance, "formed in a column of brigade fronts with an extended line of skirmishers in the front and flank." "General Newton followed, marching by the flank along the road." Howe brought up the rear.

Our progress was somewhat delayed by the enemy's skirmishers, who from the outset took advantage of every fence or tree or grove to annoy and harass our column, and for a time gave us considerable trouble. They afterwards withdrew, and we had no further trouble until we approached Salem Heights, so called, about three miles from our starting point. The country here is slightly undulating, and wooded in spots on the right of the plank road. It was bordered on the left a half-mile back from the road by quite a forest, which curved around to the road in our front, and hid from our view a sizable brick building known by the name of Salem Church. A half-mile this side of the church the Confederate lines of battle came into view at scattered intervals, and opened fire with their batteries. Brooks's division was deployed to the left of the road, and Newton partly to the left and partly to the right, and for a couple of hours a fierce conflict of the forces ensued, in which at first the Federal forces were successful, but after driving the Confederates a considerable distance, reinforcements enabled them to force us back nearly to our original line.

The left wing of the Thirty-seventh, of which my company was a part, was detached from the right wing and sent to the assistance of the First (Brooks's) Division and arrived just in time to render substantial aid in checking the Confederate advance by delivering a well directed fire at close range into a part of the advancing line. Darkness finally intervened, and our regiment was reunited and rested with arms in hand on the front line of battle on the left of the plank road. The lines of battle were in our front so close to each other that there was very little room to deploy skirmish lines, and between the lines we could hear shrieks and cries from the wounded calling for help. Relief parties were finally organized to bring in such of the wounded as could be reached. It was a warm spring night, and the mournful notes of the whippoorwill were mingled with the cries of the suffering, and as I remember were audible the greater part of the night. We slept very little.

With the dawn of the morning, we found the enemy had withdrawn their lines of battle into the edge of the woods about a half-mile to our front, and were moving around our left through the woods at about the same distance. This led to the re-arrangement of our lines. Brooks's First Division was placed in line nearly parallel to the plank road, but crossing it a mile southwest from Fredericksburg, it united with Howe's division, which then formed a right angle with Brooks's line and extended that line until later it rested its left on a bend in the river. The Confederates extended their lines so that they occupied Fredericksburg heights early in the day, and cut off our line of retreat in that direction, and all day long we could see them moving their troops into position, and tightening their coils around us.

When we lost our connection with the heights of Fredericksburg, General Sedgwick took possession of the south shore of the river from Banks's Ford to the point where Howe rested the left flank of his division. Newton's division formed a right angle with the right of Brooks's division, and crossed the plank road with his right resting on the river above Banks's Ford.[1]

Thus we were virtually occupying three sides of a hollow square, with our right and left flanks resting on the Rappahannock River, which constituted what would have been the fourth side of the square if it had been complete. It was a long drawn out line some four miles in length, with the batteries of artillery advantageously posted at different points in the line where they could render the most service. We had no reserve and no second line of battle. Our brigade was stationed on the west side of the angle formed by the union of Brooks's and Newton's divisions. All the afternoon we watched the Rebels moving through the woods on our front, and every now and then uttering the Rebel yell, at times apparently forming into lines of battle and preparing for attack. It was one of the most anxious six or seven hours that I ever spent.

About three o'clock in the afternoon I was detailed to take charge of two companies from our regiment, F and H, on the skirmish lines. Our skirmish line was located with its headquarters in the rear of a small house which was surrounded by a garden and orchard, and part of the way by a low hedge behind which the men could lie down; but I was kept moving up and down the line the greater part of the time, watching the movements of the enemy in the opposite woods, with the bullets whistling around me, and every now and then striking

[1] See War Map 135 (6).

with a stinging noise or a thud on the earth by my side. Of course I was at times sheltered by the house and at times was under the cover of a bush or a tree. Every little while when the movements in the woods indicated a gathering of the troops in any locality, our artillery shelled them with great effect, but they were too far away to be effectively reached with rifle or musket balls, and I suppose it was to this that we owed the fact that our skirmish line escaped with very small loss.

As the evening shades set in, we received orders to hold on to the skirmish line until word was sent to us, and then to withdraw as rapidly as possible to the river bank near the ford. Meanwhile, immediately after dark, the withdrawal of the troops was commenced as silently as possible, and by nine o'clock in the evening we got word to withdraw the skirmish lines, and under the leadership of a staff officer sent to guide us, to go as rapidly as possible to the vicinity of Banks's Ford, selected by General Sedgwick as a rendezvous from which the corps would cross the river. It is said that General Sedgwick on the night of the retreat expected to sacrifice our brigade to save the rest of the corps, but although we were the very last to leave the field, we applied the feet so nimbly that we got away from them.[1] One man dropped dead from exhaus-

[1] A manuscript note, in M. W. T.'s handwriting, in the margin of his copy of Bowen's *History of the Thirty-seventh Regiment*, at page 154, records his vivid recollection of the exciting experience:

"The race when the order was given to withdraw this skirmish line exceeded in speed all the rapid movements I ever saw executed by a military force. We ran two miles on the keen jump, and sank down exhausted on reaching the regiment at the ford."

An extract from the *Daily Republican* (Springfield) of Monday, May 18, 1863, attests the interest at home in following the exploits of the soldiers in the field:

"Capt. M. W. Tyler of the 37th Regiment, son of Prof. Tyler of

tion. The Rebels were firing shells and were supposed to be close behind us. We crossed the river on pontoon bridges at two o'clock the next morning. The entire loss of the regiment in killed, wounded, and captured was twenty-seven men, during these two days.

The following letter from General Newton to Governor Andrew was forwarded after our return to camp:

HEADQUARTERS THIRD DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS,
OFFICE ADJUTANT-GENERAL, May 15th, 1863.

HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN A. ANDREW,
Governor of Massachusetts.

SIR:

Permit me to call your attention to the excellent conduct of the Massachusetts regiments under my command during the late operations of the Sixth Corps. The Seventh Massachusetts stormed the Heights of Fredericksburg in columns without firing a shot and suffered severely. To Lieutenant-Colonel Harlow who commanded the regiment after the wounding of Colonel Johns, I mainly attribute this fortunate result. Colonel Harlow proved himself a hero, as this was a charge not exceeded in brilliancy and daring by any operation of the war. The Seventh ought to receive adequate praise. The Tenth and Thirty-seventh, though under fire in Fredericksburg on the morning of May 3d, rendered their principal service in the afternoon and the following day at Salem Heights. Their coolness under fire and admirable discipline merit the warmest acknowledgments. The Tenth was under command of Major Parker during the most important period of their operations,

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Amherst College, did himself great credit in the recent battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. His company was particularly exposed during the re-crossing of the river, and all speak in the highest terms of the coolness of Capt. Tyler. Glad of it. Should n't expect any other report from a man who rejected an offer of a year of foreign travel, free of expense, that he might join the army."

Colonel H. L. Eustis having command of the brigade. The conduct of all these regiments at such critical juncture has been an ample return for all the care bestowed upon their organization and discipline.

I have the honor to be,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN NEWTON, *Major-General.*

General Russell, in his report of the battle, says:

During all of Monday the enemy made repeated attempts in our front to advance his line of skirmishers, but every attempt was foiled through the vigilance and stubborn resistance of the men of this command and through the sharp and precise firing of Lieutenant Butler's battery stationed directly in our rear. Our position here was strengthened by two regiments from the Third Division, the Thirty-sixth New York Volunteers, Lieutenant-Colonel Walsh commanding, and the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, Colonel Edwards, both of whom rendered material assistance in holding and defending the position. Late in the afternoon of Monday, orders were received to draw in our pickets and to cover the withdrawal to Banks's Ford following the Second Division of this Corps. This was effected just at dusk, under cover of a very hot and accurate shelling of the woods in our front from Hexamer's and Butler's batteries. This brigade reached Banks's Ford about nine o'clock in the evening of Monday in good order, and crossed the river in safety at two o'clock in the morning of Tuesday, May 5th.[1]

After crossing we moved back one half mile from the ford and halted for the night, and slept the sleep of exhaustion due to our going without sleep the previous night and our long waiting and watching on the skirmish

[1] O. R., xxv., pt. 1, p. 592.

lines during the afternoon. About 9 A.M. they roused us from our slumbers and told us that we must move farther back beyond reach of the Confederate guns. So we marched to the rear two miles, and bivouacked in a piece of woods. About 4 P.M. it began to rain, and the rain continued on the 6th and 7th, with signs of clearing on the 8th.

Meanwhile, General Hooker had crossed with the rest of the Army of the Potomac at United States Ford on the night of May 5th, and orders were received on the evening of the 7th for the army to return to their old camps at the north side of the Rappahannock, and accordingly, on the morning of the 8th, we marched nine miles back to our old camp in mud and rain. My diary says, mud almost as bad as that in the "mud march." In a letter dated the 9th, written to my parents, I say:

> Here we are back again in our old camp and quarters after almost a fortnight's absence. We have made a reconnoissance in force, taken the heights, advanced five miles into the enemy's country, fought a battle, and accomplished nothing except that we have given one more crushing blow to the Army of the Potomac, and promoted the feeling that we cannot drive the enemy beyond the lines of the Rappahannock River. As yet we know nothing of what the state of things is in General Hooker's army. How badly he was whipped and what was the reason of his failure are matters of pure conjecture with us.

I received some credit from the field officers of the regiment for the way in which I handled the two companies on the picket line during the retreat. Although the movement was very rapid, I succeeded in keeping the men together, which, owing to the darkness of the

night, it was rather difficult to do. Some 200 knapsacks were thrown away by the regiment on the retreat, while of these Company F lost only five. We were the last to leave the field, and were the nearest of any of our troops to the enemy's line.[1]

After our return to camp we resumed the same routine of duties and occupations as before our movement across the river. Daily drills, varied with an occasional detail for picket duty, an occasional review, and frequent thorough inspections by the regimental, brigade, and division inspectors, kept us very busy. The army very soon recovered its confidence and its courage. The feeling among the officers and the men was that General Hooker ought to have succeeded; that the campaign was well planned and admirably executed up to the time that General Hooker withdrew the army into the woods about Chancellorsville. After that he failed utterly both in handling and in fighting his troops, and at the critical moment was himself injured and picked up for dead, leaving the army practically without a commander during the battle. We felt that the organization of the army as a whole was more complete, that the rank and file were in better fighting mood and condition, than they had ever been before, and that if they could only be well commanded the army would give a good account of itself.

During the month of May we moved our camp from

[1] Bowen, at page 153, says: "The safety of the Thirty-seventh evoked the most lively satisfaction at corps headquarters, since from its peculiarly exposed position it had been feared that it must be cut off, but the most remarkable fact was that the skirmish line had been able to do so valiant work in delaying the advance of the enemy and still bring away every man. The admirable steadiness and efficiency of Company F had been closely watched and warmly praised by their comrades in the regimental line."

the position we had occupied during the previous March and April to a grove five miles nearer Aquia Creek, where we had a good water supply and plenty of wood for fires and for making an attractive camp. This condition of preparation and camp routine continued until the 4th of June, when we began to receive orders looking toward a movement of the army. On the 6th we broke camp and marched down the Rappahannock to the familiar grounds selected by General Franklin for laying pontoon bridges in the previous December, pitched our tents, and awaited further orders. A pontoon bridge had been laid across the river, and Howe's division of our corps was already on the other side.

Sunday, the 7th, the weather was hot, but relieved by showers in the afternoon. Our camp was on a plantation or farm owned by a Dr. Morson, whose house was situated on the river bank with the cabins of his negroes located around it. The doctor had 1500 acres of land, and the previous summer had had fifty-eight negroes, he told me, but then had only ten left, and they said they would stay only as long as the army stayed. They were staying at Dr. M.'s urgent solicitation, but feared that if the army should leave, they might be sold south. I talked with the negroes, and found their ideas of slavery rather hard. They were carrying on a profitable trade with the soldiers, selling hoe-cakes at twenty-five cents apiece. These cakes consisted of a mixture of cornmeal and water, with a little salt, baked on the hot hearthstones, and were liked by the soldiers because they varied the usual hard-tack diet. We could also sometimes induce the darkies to sell us a little milk at twenty-five cents a quart.

On the 10th of June our brigade crossed the river and went into line behind the rifle-pits in front of the Bar-

nard house where we stayed until the 13th doing guard and picket duty. Occasionally the monotony of the scene would be varied by a few shells from the batteries occupied by the Rebels on the heights, but they never succeeded in doing us any injury by their shell-firing while we were there.[1]

On the night of June 13th we recrossed the Rappahannock and the whole army was put in march toward the north. It was very hot, and all extra accumulations in the shape of underclothing and overcoats and extra suits were thrown away, until the whole country seemed to be covered with the discarded garments of the army.

We reached Stafford Court-House on that day at four o'clock in the afternoon, and then halted until ten o'clock at night, when we started again and marched all night, but made slow progress because there were not roads enough in which the troops could be moved, and

[1] In a letter to his parents, dated June 12, 1863, M. W. T. speaks of the Barnard house as a mass of ruins with "many splendid trees around it, and under one of these I am sitting and writing to-day." "I rather enjoy writing letters when I have the accommodations, but out here it is a task. To begin back where I last left off. Wednesday morning we were relieved from picket duty and returned to support a battery of siege guns that lay on the plain back of our picket ground. There I lay all day. About four P.M. I took it into my head to go in swimming, and had a very nice time. I swam the Rappahannock—some thirty rods wide. . . . That night our division moved across the river, and we started about nine o'clock and got into position on this side in some rifle-pits in front of the famous Barnard house (General Franklin's old head-quarters), and where General Bayard was killed. About twelve we were allowed to lie down on the ground with our arms in our hands, but could not undo our blankets. I slept right on the ground for the first time in my life. We were all aroused the next morning a little before day began to dawn, a quarter of three, to stand at arms and be ready for the enemy in case of an attack. We did the same last night. So you see we are gradually turning night into day."

those that we had were largely occupied by the trains and the artillery.

On June 15th we marched sixteen miles to Dumfries, and then rested during the evening until midnight, when we started again and marched eighteen miles on the 16th, reaching the Occoquan at twelve o'clock, and rested there until three in the afternoon, when we again took up our line of march and reached Fairfax Station at six in the evening, having made twenty miles during the day. Rumor told us at this time that Lee was already in Maryland, and marching to the north.

On June 17th we rested, and resumed our march on the 18th, starting at three-thirty in the morning, but after proceeding a short distance beyond Fairfax Court-House, we halted, and pitched our tents and remained until the 24th of June, when we once more received marching orders, and moved to within about five miles of Centreville, and went into camp in a very picturesque country, with the mountains in full view to the west and the plains of Manassas, covered with the verdure of spring, stretching in long distances before us to the south and east. We remained there until the 26th of June, when we moved by Chantilly to Dranesville, making a march of eighteen miles.

On June 27th we started at five in the morning, and marched three miles to Edwards Ferry, where we crossed the Potomac, proceeded two miles farther to the village of Poolsville, and on June 28th we started at four A.M. and marched through Barnesville to the vicinity of Newmarket, a distance of eighteen miles. While here we received the announcement that General Hooker was relieved from the command of the army, and that General Meade had been appointed his successor.

The reason for our march north, which I have here described, was the discovery by General Hooker that Lee was preparing to invade the North. By his victories at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville he was encouraged to believe that the Army of Northern Virginia was more than a match for the Army of the Potomac on any field. His army was stronger by the addition of Longstreet's corps[1] than it was at Chancellorsville; while the Army of the Potomac was weakened by the expiration of the terms of service of its two years' men, numbering nearly thirty thousand. The North had not yet found a competent commander for the Army of the Potomac; while the South believed that they had an invincible army, led by a genius of war. In Richmond nothing less than the subjugation of the North would satisfy the people. The latter part of May, General Lee began to move his forces towards the upper Rappahannock, and on the 4th of June, when we crossed the river once more, Ewell and Stuart were in the neighborhood of Culpeper. On the 13th they appeared at Winchester, and on the 15th captured a large part of Milroy's army, and the Rebel cavalry pushed on and occupied Chambersburg.[2] On the 27th Ewell encamped within four miles of Harrisburg,[3] the capital of Pennsylvania.

The North once more was panic-stricken. On the 15th President Lincoln issued a proclamation[4] calling upon three Eastern border States and Ohio for 100,000 militia to serve for six months unless sooner discharged, and other States, noticeably New York, volunteered

[1] Swinton, pp. 309–10.
[2] Swinton, pp. 314, 317, 319; Rhodes, iv., p. 273.
[3] Rhodes, iv., p. 273.
[4] O. R., xxvii., pt. 3, p. 136.

aid, and the celebrated Seventh Regiment again took the field, and went to the relief of the sister State of Pennsylvania. The crisis of the war was at hand, and the battle was to be fought on Northern soil.

CHAPTER VI

GETTYSBURG

JULY 1–3, 1863

THE situation of the two armies when General Meade succeeded to the command of the Army of the Potomac was as follows:

General Hooker had substantially succeeded in keeping the Confederate army west of the Blue Ridge, and General Lee had, therefore, been obliged to cross the Potomac River above Harper's Ferry and was moving his army through the Cumberland Valley[1] into the heart of Pennsylvania. As stated above, Ewell and his corps were in the neighborhood of Harrisburg at Carlisle and York.[2] Lee and Longstreet were at Chambersburg, and Hill and his corps were at Fayetteville,[3] while Stuart and his cavalry corps, who had just started upon one of their raids around the Army of the Potomac, were at Hood's Mill[4] on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad within a short distance of Baltimore.

The Union army was on the east side of the South Mountain and the Catoctin Range in the vicinity of Frederick, Maryland. On the night of the 28th of June, Lee sent word to his different commands to concentrate at Gettysburg.[5] This recall of Ewell's army

[1] O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 114.
[2] O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 298.
[3] *Id.*, p. 606.
[4] *Id.*, pp. 694–5.
[5] *Id.*, p. 307. See Rhodes, iv., 282; Swinton's *Army of the Potomac*, pp. 326, 327.

from its invasion of the southern part of Pennsylvania was due to the fact that Lee was surprised to find the Army of the Potomac so closely in his rear, and that he began to fear they might intercept his line of communications, which he was obliged to keep open to insure a continued supply of ammunition for his army.[1] He moved across the mountain in order to threaten Baltimore and prevent Meade from attacking his rear.

The Union army was anxious to protect the cities of Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, and at this time Meade had in mind to make his line of defence at Pipe Creek, an affluent of the Monocacy River, about twenty miles southeast of Gettysburg. With this in view, on the 29th he moved the First and Eleventh Corps to Emmitsburg, and the Third and Twelfth to Middleburg, and the Fifth Corps to Taneytown, the Second to Union Town,[2] and the Sixth to New Windsor, with cavalry brigades covering his right and left flanks.[3] In the Southern army, Heth's division of Hill's corps was moved to Cashtown,[4] within eight miles of Gettysburg. Longstreet joined the rest of Hill's corps at Fayetteville.[5] At York, Early received the order to return to Gettysburg on the afternoon of the 29th, and prepared to start the next morning.[6] Rodes's and Johnson's divisions started from Carlisle and moved toward Gettysburg, but they were loaded down with plunder and had to move slowly.[7]

[1] Rhodes, iv., p. 282.

[2] Or Union.

[3] See itinerary of the Army of the Potomac, compiled by Mr. Joseph W. Kirkley, O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 144. Also War Map 27 (1).

[4] O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 607. See War Map 43 (7).

[5] See Longstreet's report, O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 358.

[6] O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 467, bottom, General Early's report of the battle of Gettysburg.

[7] The 30th. See report of Major-General R. E. Rodes, O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 551, bot., and top of p. 552.

On June 30th the Union army extended from the Emmitsburg Road, with the First Corps on its left at Marsh Creek and the Sixth Corps on its right at Manchester,[1] while of the Confederate army, Ewell's corps had reached Heidlersburg,[2] nine miles north of Gettysburg. Longstreet was still at Fayetteville,[3] while the main part of Hill's corps was at Cashtown,[4] eight miles west of Gettysburg. In fact, at the close of the 30th of June, two thirds of Lee's army was within eight miles of Gettysburg, while only two sevenths of Meade's army was within twelve miles of the same place; but there was this difference: Lee's whole army was under orders to assemble there, and was actually on its way to that destination, while one seventh of Meade's army, viz., the First Corps, was moving in that direction, while the other corps were waiting for orders. Stuart's cavalry had met with obstacles at Hanover and at Carlisle on this day, but avoided them by making wide detours which exhausted the strength of his men and horses.[5]

By evening Meade was aware that the Confederate forces were gathering at Gettysburg. Reynolds, at Marsh Creek with the First Corps, was only separated by six miles from Hill at Cashtown. Meade and Reynolds were both from the State of Pennsylvania, and were both fired with an ardent desire to rid their State of the insolent invasion of the Southern army at the earliest practicable moment. Meade declined to give Reynolds any orders on the night of the 30th, but the next morning he told him to advance and hold Gettys-

[1] O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, pp. 114, 144.
[2] O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 444, top, Ewell's report.
[3] See Longstreet's report, *id.*, p. 358.
[4] *Id.*, p. 607. See War Map 43 (7).
[5] See Stuart's report, O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, pp. 695–6.

burg, and directed the Eleventh Corps to support him, and requested the Third Corps to do the same.[1]

Buford, with two cavalry brigades, was in the environs of Gettysburg that night.[2] On the morning of July 1st, a momentous day, Buford, with his cavalry brigades, was in possession of Seminary Ridge, to the west of Gettysburg, and of the country in front of it to Willoughby Run. Hill and his corps were approaching from the west, and Ewell and his corps were approaching from the north.[3] Reynolds and the First Corps of the Union army were coming to his assistance from the south, and Howard with the Eleventh Corps from a still farther starting point,[4] Reynolds being distant three hours, and Howard about six. Back a half-mile from Seminary Ridge, and partially parallel to it, was Cemetery Ridge, which extended three miles towards the south, and there terminated in two famous hills—Round Top and Little Round Top,—and towards the north, the same ridge curved first to the northeast and then to the east and southeast, and terminated in another rugged eminence known to history by the name of Culp's Hill. This was the famous battlefield of Gettysburg.[5] The village of Gettysburg was a short distance north of the point where the ridge curved to the northeast. It was a peaceful hamlet devoted to education and the study of theology, and gave its name to the greatest battle ever fought upon the North American continent.

Buford and his cavalry used every device known to cavalry tactics to delay the progress of the enemy until the arrival of the Union infantry. Meanwhile, Rey-

[1] O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 114. [2] See Buford's report, *id.*, p. 923, top.
[3] See reports of General Lee, O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, pp. 298 and 307.
[4] See report of General Meade, O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 114.
[5] See War Maps 40 (2), 43 (1), 95 (1), 116 (2).

nolds arrived and recognized the advantages of the Cemetery Ridge for a defensive line of battle, and offered his life as a sacrifice to save it for the Union army. The First and Eleventh Corps numbered ten thousand killed, wounded, and captured, in the same cause, but at the end of the day Lee's army was occupying Seminary Ridge, while three and a half corps of the Army of the Potomac were gathered on Cemetery Ridge, and Meade had concluded to bring his other corps to Gettysburg and accept the gauge of battle with Lee's invading and triumphant army there.[1] It was a momentous decision, and made Gettysburg the American Waterloo.

The Second Corps was already within ten miles of the battlefield, and Meade sent word to the Fifth, which was twenty-three miles distant, and to the Sixth, thirty-six miles distant at Manchester,[2] to hurry forward and join the rest of the army.[3]

It was a hot summer night,[4] and we had retired by nine o'clock, and suddenly, a little after ten o'clock, we were aroused by the order to pack, get into line, and move,—we in the ranks knew not whither or why. In their hurry they led us ten miles out of our way, and we had to retrace our steps, but all night long, with never a halt longer than ten minutes, we trudged away. Morning came, and they allowed us only thirty minutes to get our breakfast. As we went on, rumors of a great battle with dubious result reached our ears, but the farmers along the route brought us words of cheer, and fed us with cherries and milk and cooked food of great variety. Still we kept moving. It was a very hot day,

[1] See report of General Meade, O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 115.

[2] About twenty-two miles air-line distance, besides which they went ten miles out of their way.

[3] See Itinerary by Kirkley, O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 144.

[4] 1st of July.

and as we pressed on the heat told upon the marching men. Many fell out, and when we got within four miles of our destination, orders were issued to halt and get our forces together. It was nearly two hours before we started again, but about two o'clock in the afternoon we arrived on the banks of Rock Creek, a short distance back of Little Round Top. At the point where the Thirty-seventh halted, the stream had been dammed, and there was a small mill. Within a very few minutes the soldiers had stripped off their clothing and hundreds of them were in the pond struggling for a bath. The water was full of blood-suckers; I never saw so many on any other occasion of my life. One or more was ornamenting every soldier as he emerged from the water.

Ours was the last corps of the Army of the Potomac to arrive on the field of battle. The Fifth Corps started at 7 P.M., and by a night march escaped the hot sun and reached its destination a little after 5 o'clock of the morning of the 2d. The day was one of preparation on both sides until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Our line was shaped like a fishhook, with our right at the point of the hook. The Twelfth Corps was stationed on that flank called Culp's Hill; next, in the order named, were the Eleventh, First, Second, and Third Corps, with the Fifth and Sixth in reserve.[1]

In an endeavor to secure possession or control of the

[1] See report of General Meade, O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 115, bottom, and top of 116, which shows the First Corps on the right of the Eleventh instead of on the left. War Map 43 (1) shows the position of the several corps on the 2d of July, with the Sixth in reserve on the right on Cemetery Hill. On the arrival of the Sixth Corps, the Fifth was ordered by General Meade "to move over to our extreme left, and the Sixth to occupy its place as a reserve for the right." [Meade's report (*supra*), p. 116.]

Emmitsburg Road, as well as of the Round Tops and the rocky field in their front called the Devil's Garden, General Sickles of the Third Corps had bent the Union line of battle to the front, and at the Peach Orchard it nearly made a right angle, and was then prolonged to the Devil's Den on its left flank. The two Round Tops were at this time only occupied for signal stations. On the Confederate side Ewell was opposite to our right flank, Hill to our centre, and Longstreet to our left.[1] Their line was five miles long, while ours was only four.[2]

After examination and consideration, General Lee decided to attack the right and left flanks, and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, General Longstreet, under instructions from General Lee, assaulted General Sickles's exposed angle at the Peach Orchard, at the same time sending a column around our extreme left to secure possession of the two Round Tops. The attack of the Peach Orchard was overwhelming, and for two succeeding hours a terrific combat was waged between the contending forces for the supreme control of that part of the field. Longstreet succeeded in forcing our line back to the foot of Little Round Top and at one time his men had possession of Round Top—and his column pressing forward to occupy Little Round Top, met the Fifth Corps, whom General Warren had diverted from other assigned directions,[3] on the summit of the hill, and in a face-to-face, hand-to-hand grapple, with bayonets, musket butts, and deadly short-range bullets, the Union men strewed the ground with Confederate gray, and drove the shattered remnant of

[1] O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 308.
[2] Position is shown on War Map 43 (1).
[3] See latter part of note, p. 103 *supra*.

the force down the precipitous sides of the hills into the plain.

The Sixth Corps was summoned to assist in driving back Longstreet's assaulting columns, and went into position at the foot of Little Round Top about five o'clock on that afternoon. While there, waiting our turn to join the deadly fray, my recollection is that our brigade was suddenly called upon to join the rescue forces on Little Round Top, and that we started on the double-quick to ascend the hill, but had not gone very far when we were halted, and after a brief delay returned to our former place with the corps.[1]

The different histories of this event speak of "two brigades of the Sixth Corps" participating in this rescue. For instance, General Walker, in his *History of the Second Army Corps*, at page 281, says, "But from Little Round Top, now firmly held by the good troops which first won it, reinforced by the Pennsylvania Reserves and two brigades of the Sixth Corps, coming in from their continuous march of thirty hours, Longstreet recoils." And later, on page 285, he says: "The brigades of Wheaton and Nevin, of the Sixth Corps, arriving from their long march, at the same time come into view alongside of Little Round Top, while Crawford's Pennsylvanians advance from the extreme left of our line. This suffices for Longstreet."

On General Reynolds's death, General Newton, our division commander, was appointed to the command of the First Corps.[2] General Wheaton succeeded him in the command of our (the Third) division, and Colonel Nevin succeeded General Wheaton in command of his (the Third) brigade. Wheaton's and Nevin's brigade

[1] See Meade's report (*supra*), p. 116.

[2] See O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 155, footnote (§).

was one and the same brigade, and the brigade called Wheaton's, which in these accounts was associated with Nevin's, was that of General Eustis (the Second), of which the Thirty-seventh was a member.[1] This corresponds exactly with the account given by Bowen in his *History of the Thirty-seventh Regiment.* At page 183 he says in speaking of the culmination of Longstreet's attack and fight: "It was at this time that the Sixth Corps—never more welcome—began to reach the scene. Nevin's brigade (lately Wheaton's), which had led the corps in that memorable march, swept over the hill, pushed the Confederates back, and held the ground. Close in their wake Eustis's brigade was in line of battle ready to test its mettle, but it was not needed."

In Doubleday's *Chancellorsville and Gettysburg,*[2] page 173, in writing of the advance of Ayres's division of regulars at the "Wheatfield," it is recorded: "His [Ayres's] return was aided by the artillery on Little Round Top, and by the advance of part of the Sixth Corps"; and on page 174, "As Crawford charged, two brigades of Sedgwick's division [corps?], those of Nevin and Wheaton [Eustis?], formed on the right and below Little Round Top. The sight of the firm front presented by these fresh troops discouraged Longstreet, who went forward to reconnoitre, and he gave up all attempts at making any farther advance."

It is certain that when Longstreet's attack culminated,

[1] The corps organization is given in O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 163:
Third Division: Maj.-Gen. John Newton. Brig.-Gen. Frank Wheaton.
First Brigade: Brig.-Gen. Alexander Shaler.
Second Brigade: Col. Henry L. Eustis (7th, 10th, and 37th Mass. and 2d R. I.).
Third Brigade: Brig.-Gen. Frank Wheaton. Col. David J. Nevin.

[2] *Campaigns of Civil War* (series), Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882.

three of his brigades, namely, those of Wofford, Kershaw,[1] and Anderson, had reached the rear of the Wheatfield, and were close to the base of Little Round Top. The Sixth Corps was massed there, and Wheaton's division was in the front of that corps line. Upon Batchelder's maps of Gettysburg (second day), Nevin's brigade is located slightly north and west of the ridge line of Little Round Top, while the other two brigades, to wit, Eustis's and Shaler's, of that division are located back of the ridge line and at some distance in a southeasterly direction from Nevin's brigade. I think the brigades were together and in the position assigned on the map to Nevin's brigade. I distinctly remember that our view to the front was not obstructed by trees as it would have been had we been located where Batchelder's map puts us. This also accords with the position assigned to us in the accounts from which I have above quoted. We did not fire a gun, but we were ready to go in to the limit of our strength, if our commanders had but given the word. When the firing ceased and Longstreet's attack was stayed, we lay down with muskets and swords in hand, upon a thick mat of moss of nature's bountiful providing, which furnished us a bed of oriental or even celestial luxury, and we slept soundly until dawn of the 3d of July.

Meanwhile Ewell's attack on the right of our line at Culp's Hill had so far succeeded as to capture a part of our works, which they held during the night. General Shaler's brigade of our division and corps was ordered during the night to report to General Slocum of the Twelfth Corps, and to co-operate in an attempt to dislodge the enemy. Later, during the morning of the 3d, Eustis's brigade was ordered to aid in the movement,

[1] See Kershaw's Report of the Battle, O. R., xxvii., pt. 2, p. 369.

and made the march to the right of our line, but arrived just in time to find that Culp's Hill had been recaptured and that their services were not needed.

July 3d was a day of excessive heat, and as the Sixth Corps was in reserve, it was their lot to detach brigades or regiments, as they were needed, to go to any part of the line that required strengthening or assistance, and stay until the emergency was past. In this way the corps was much scattered and divided during the day, and it did a great deal of hard work in answer to hurry calls which sent them on long errands at the double-quick. While the regiments were actually engaged or in line of battle, the regimental officers dismounted and sent their horses to a place of safety in the rear. As they were unaccustomed to foot service, these expeditions to different parts of the field on foot and at double-quick, in such a heat, bore particularly hard on them. The result was that an unusually large number of regimental officers were prostrated by the heat on that day, Colonel Edwards and Lieutenant-Colonel Montague of the Thirty-seventh among the number. As stated before, Eustis's brigade was sent to the right of the line early in the day. They returned to their position with the corps a little after one o'clock.

General Lee, finding that his two flank attacks, from which he had anticipated large and decisive results, had both proved failures, now decided to mass his artillery and to launch a selected column of fifteen thousand men into the very heart of the Union army, and by one supreme effort to conquer the North. By noon he had one hundred and forty-five guns in position ready to pour death and destruction into our lines, and for two hours the very earth shrieked and groaned with the cries of the wounded and the agonies of the dying. We were

returning from the right of the line as this *feu d'enfer* struck us, and in less time than I can tell it we had twenty-three men killed and wounded by their shells. We hurried on to join our corps, but had hardly reached them when our brigade was ordered to return to General Meade's headquarters, which we also did at the double-quick, and we had the good fortune to reach there just as Pickett's charge culminated.

We stood in line of battle ready to move forward to the attack and saw thousands of Pickett's men throw down their arms and surrender to the Union forces. It was an inspiring scene. It was one of the few triumphs the Army of the Potomac was permitted to enjoy. They could only inscribe Gettysburg and Appomattox on their banners, while the Army of Northern Virginia boasted of triumphs from Bull Run to Petersburg. But it was the dogged pertinacity of the North that would not give way to discouragement, which out of disaster wrought the final crown of success, and achieved a victory that saved the life of the nation. We slept in peace that night. The next day was given to quiet and repose. It was the Fourth of July, but the silence of death reigned supreme on the battlefield. North and South were burying their dead, and had no thought of celebrating the anniversary of the Nation's birth.

It was Saturday morning and the Thirty-seventh was detailed for picket duty. The Confederates were resting under the cover of the trees. Aside from the occasional glimmer of their muskets through the foliage, there was nothing to indicate their presence. In the afternoon we moved back into line with the rest of the army and built rifle-pits for our protection against a surprise. We were located on a ledge of rocks that

made a hollow place where water accumulated and formed something of a pond. A heavy shower occurred in the middle of the night, and we found ourselves afloat, and were compelled to spend the balance of the night standing in the water. The losses of the Thirty-seventh in the battle of Gettysburg were two enlisted men killed, and twenty-six wounded and nineteen captured or missing.

When we awoke on Sunday morning, July 5th, we were startled by the intelligence that the Confederate army had gone from our front. It did not take long for us to get under way, but the weather was warm and our march very slow.

General Lee went directly west from Gettysburg, and General Meade concluded to go south and avoid a collision with Lee in the mountains. His route lay through Emmitsburg, and from there we climbed over the Catoctin Mountains and passed through Middletown and over the South Mountain Pass back of Middletown into the Valley of the Potomac.[1] It was a wild and picturesque country that we were traversing. The climb up the mountains back of Middletown was very hard. We encountered a heavy rain on the mountain-top, which cleared the atmosphere and gave us a beautiful view of the valley when we started the next morning. Lee went directly to Williamsport, where he had left a pontoon bridge to be used upon his return into Virginia, but when he got there he found that the pontoons had been destroyed by General French of the Union army,[2] and he was obliged to wait for several days before he was able to cross into Virginia. General Meade halted his army opposite that of Lee at Williams-

[1] See War Map 116 (2).

[2] O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 489, top.

port and for two or three days it looked very much as if a general engagement would ensue.

At Funkstown my regiment skirmished with the Rebel army all of one day, and in the course of our pursuit of the Confederates I personally had a very narrow escape. I was directed by Colonel Edwards to explore a hill behind which the Rebels had just disappeared, and we were anxious to know whether the hill was occupied by them or had been vacated. In my explorations I had a rifle ball pass through my hat, and came very near being shot at short range with two other members of my company who were with me on the picket line at the time.

General Lee crossed the Potomac on the 14th of July, and we immediately followed the movement of his column, going down the east side of the Potomac River, while he went down the west side into the Shenandoah Valley.

On July 16th we crossed the Potomac at Berlin, and from there proceeded into Virginia on the east side of the Blue Mountain range. We made eleven miles in our first day's march into Virginia, July 19th, and on the 20th we went as far as Union, where we halted for the night. From Union we moved through Upperville on the 22d of July, and from there went to Rectortown and Salem. The whole country in this part of Virginia at this season of the year was most bountifully supplied with blackberries, sufficient to feed the Army of the Potomac. I never saw blackberries in such quantity and of such fine quality. We feasted upon them for days. We remained in this neighborhood until the end of the month.

CHAPTER VII

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH HELPS TO ENFORCE THE DRAFT IN NEW YORK CITY

JULY 30 TO OCTOBER 14, 1863

JUST at this juncture a peculiar condition of affairs existed in the metropolitan city of New York. Throughout the State, and more especially in the city of New York, there was a lawless element which had a very decided inclination at this time to sympathize with the Rebel armies in the field. New York was the most populous and wealthy State in the Union. It had a large foreign population, and that population, particularly the Irish part of it, was hostile to the negroes, and opposed to the war because they thought it was an abolition movement. Horatio Seymour was the Governor, and the constitutional commander-in-chief of its military forces. He was a popular orator, a plausible demagogue, a man of much force and ability, and a leading Democratic politician, having great influence both in the State and in the national councils of his party.

In the early part of 1863, the Federal government had decided to make an effort to add to the strength of its armies by a compulsory draft. Steps were being taken to enforce such a draft throughout the United States at the very time that the battle of Gettysburg was

being fought. Governor Seymour and the State of New York resisted the draft and threw obstacles in the way of its enforcement.

It was of great importance to the Northern armies and to the national government that the draft should be a success. Volunteering had ceased, and we had resorted to bounties to fill our ranks. Owing to the terrible havoc and distress of the war, appeals to patriotism no longer availed. Once let the army in the field get the idea that they could not depend upon further re-enforcement, and they would become discouraged, and the war would come to a speedy end. This was the crisis we were facing. President Lincoln had ordered that the draft be enforced in the City of New York on the 13th of July, 1863.

At the appointed hour, seven o'clock, the provost marshal and his deputies were on hand with the appliances of their office to begin the work. There was no secrecy about it. Any citizen could attend and watch the proceedings and see that the business was honestly conducted. The lists were transferred to slips of paper, put into a large wheel, and after the wheel had been sufficiently revolved to thoroughly stir and mix the slips, a blindfolded man drew from the wheel the names of those whom the law said must serve as soldiers, or furnish a substitute, unless they could prove themselves disqualified for service by age or other incapacity. The poor man immediately said he was discriminated against because he could not pay for a substitute, and suddenly swarms of angry women and infuriated men began to gather in the streets and with bricks, paving stones, and clubs to assault the offices of the provost marshal. Windows were smashed, the furniture was destroyed, the officers fled for their lives, the buildings

were fired, and for four days the city was delivered over to the drunken fury of the mob. The police were powerless. The city militia had gone to Gettysburg in answer to the Governor's call. Colored orphan asylums were set on fire. Negroes were hunted like wild beasts. The houses and homes of the abolitionists and the offices of the newspapers were threatened with destruction, and in many instances barricaded and guarded by armed men. Volunteers and veterans protected the armories and the arsenals, and a few gunboats were anchored in the river to warn the mob of impending retribution at the hands of the national government. Meanwhile the militia began to return, and President Lincoln agreed to postpone the enforcement of the draft until the 19th of August.

On July 30th the order from which the following is extracted was issued:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
July 30, 1863.

Special Orders, No. 202.

VII. Pursuant to instructions which have been received from the general-in-chief, four regiments of this army will immediately proceed to New York Harbor, and, on arriving there, will be reported to Brig.-Gen. E. R. S. Canby. Two of these regiments will be taken from the Third Corps and two from the Sixth Corps, and will be selected preferably from Western and New England regiments. No New York or Pennsylvania troops will be sent. The corps commanders named will detach for duty strong and efficient regiments, and will have them march to-morrow morning, in season to reach Warrenton Junction by 11 A.M.

By command of Major-General Meade:
S. WILLIAMS, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*[1]

[1] O. R., xxvii., pt. 3, p. 787.

On July 31st General Meade reported to General Halleck that the First and Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, Fifth Wisconsin, and Twentieth Indiana were ordered to New York Harbor; aggregate present for duty 1643 men, Colonel Edwards in command.[1]

At midnight of July 30th we were awakened by the startling announcement that we were to start for New York at three o'clock A.M. to assist in enforcing the draft. No more sleep for us that night. We began to pack immediately, and got our breakfast and were ready to start at three A.M., but as usual, on such occasions, the movement was delayed and we did not start until five. Then we marched to Warrenton Junction, ten miles, arriving there at ten-thirty in the morning. We were loaded on freight cars and taken to Alexandria, where we arrived at three o'clock that afternoon. We devoured what pies and cakes we could find at hand in the streets of Alexandria during our short stay there, and then went forward to Washington, where we arrived at five o'clock, and had more pies and cakes. In addition to this we were taken to some barracks and fed on the same kind of rations which were served to us on the occasion of our first visit to Washington. They tasted a little better than they had on the first occasion, because we had become accustomed to that kind of fare, but they did not taste half as good as the street pies and cakes that we picked up along the highway.

We left Washington at midnight and reached Baltimore at eight o'clock the next morning. Here we were fed on lemonade and cake on the streets, which again tasted wonderfully good to our starved stomachs. We left Baltimore at noon and passed through Havre de Grace and reached Philadelphia at eight o'clock that

[1] O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 108.

night, where as usual we had a feast that was fit for the gods. From Philadelphia we rode in passenger cars, which made us feel that we were once more in the country where we were recognized as human beings. From there they carried us over the old Camden and Amboy route to Amboy, where we arrived at eight o'clock Sunday morning, August 2d, and by nine o'clock were on board a boat sailing up the magnificent harbor of New York. We landed at the Battery at ten o'clock of that day.

To breathe the sea air and enjoy the refreshing sights and scenes of a civilized city like New York seemed like Elysium. We looked like tramps, but we did not mind that. We knew we were welcome, and never before had the Battery looked so beautiful. We marched up Broadway to the City Hall Park, dined at the Massachusetts Relief rooms just opposite, and then marched back to the Battery. There we learned that our destination was Fort Hamilton, which we reached at five o'clock that afternoon, and drew tents and pitched camp as rapidly as possible. We were prepared to find any spot attractive after the experiences which we had passed through, but this seemed like a visit to a watering place in the midst of the heat of summer, and all at Uncle Sam's expense. Good bathing privileges were given us on the shore a short distance from our camp, and the next few days we luxuriated in sea bathing. But it was not all as fine as it looked. We had not been there many days before the regiments began to be afflicted with fever and ague, and as a consequence we suffered from fever and ague for years afterwards. The camp was located on the borders of a muddy marsh, and malaria became epidemic.

Of course we managed to communicate at once with

our friends and let them know that we had unexpectedly come to New York. My father and mother and brothers at the time were making a visit to Binghamton, New York, and they were as much surprised when they received my telegram announcing my presence in New York City as I was at being there. It did not take them very long to come to the city and look me over and see that I was veritably in the flesh, and during the next fortnight we had much pleasant visiting, not only from our relatives, but from friends who happened to know of our presence and took occasion to call upon us. We were allowed more or less liberty in going to the city and in making calls and visits upon our friends there. Of course we were treated with great consideration and had every attention that heart could desire or love bestow.

At Fort Hamilton we were encamped with a company of regulars, and our drill and dress-parade were consequently brought into comparison with theirs. This put us upon our mettle and we did our best to maintain the reputation of the Thirty-seventh for military proficiency.

August 6th was celebrated as a day of special thanksgiving appointed by President Lincoln[1] in recognition of the blessings vouchsafed to the national arms in the victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. We celebrated the day as a sort of thanksgiving festival, which the presence of our friends made an occasion of thorough enjoyment. Thus the happy days passed until on the 18th day of August, after dress parade, we received the announcement that our presence would be required in the city on the following day to see that the draft was duly and regularly made.

[1] *Complete Works* (Nicolay and Hay), vol. ii., p. 370.

We at once exchanged our dress suits for our rough campaign suits, were embarked on board a steamboat at the wharf, carried to New York, and disembarked at the Battery, with sixty rounds of ammunition in our cartridge boxes. We passed the night at the Battery, and in the early morning marched up Broadway to Washington Square, where the regiment went into camp and details were made from the various companies and sent to the drafting places to enforce the draft.

Everything was as quiet and orderly as a New England Sabbath. No disturbance occurred anywhere, and in the evening the various details were gathered again in the park and we slept with our guards and pickets thrown out as if we were in the enemy's country, and on the following afternoon the regiment again marched down Broadway to the Battery and embarked on the boat and returned to Fort Hamilton, where our drills and inspections and guard-mountings and parades under the eye of the regulars were resumed.

Colonel Edwards thought this a good time for him to be married and accordingly left us to our own devices, went west to Illinois, and very soon returned with his bride, a charming lady, full of Western vivacity and life. She was immediately adopted by the regiment, and from time to time made us very pleasant visits.

We remained at Fort Hamilton until the 12th of September, when we received orders to pack and to go into camp in the city of New York. The ground selected as a camp for us to occupy was located on Fifth Avenue, between 48th and 49th Streets, near the Catholic Cathedral. Think of residing on Fifth Avenue even for a short space of time after having wallowed in the mud of Virginia! It was like dreamland.

Our camp was immediately the centre of interest there and the ladies of the neighborhood feasted us with all the delicacies that heart could desire. We had daily guard-mountings and dress-parades, attended by large audiences from Fifth Avenue and its vicinity, and long lines of carriages stood waiting on the avenue in front of our quarters, occupied by fair maidens who daily resorted there to witness our proficiency and to encourage us by their presence.

On September 15th, I was sent with a detail, composed of my own company and another company from the regiment, to report to police headquarters at 300 Mulberry Street. My duty there was to receive and take charge of deserters and conscripts who were arrested and brought in by the police each day, and to return them to their regiments in the neighborhood of Washington. I had a large room assigned to me for my office at police headquarters with the two companies lodged in the building to act under my orders. I felt very much like a New York police commissioner with an independent police force. My time was very largely my own, so that I could call on friends or occasionally go to the theatre, always provided I was on hand when the General sent for me to report at his headquarters, which circumstance did not occur more than twice while I was there. This lasted until the 6th of October, when the detail at police headquarters was discontinued, and we rejoined the regiment at Fifth Avenue.

On October 10th I went home to Amherst on leave of absence for ten days, and during my absence the regiment received orders from Washington directing its return to Virginia, which was accordingly undertaken on the 14th of October, 1863. Breaking camp at 8 o'clock in the morning and marching down Fifth

Avenue and Broadway to the foot of Murray Street, they embarked on a steamer and took the cars for Philadelphia. The cause of their return was General Lee's movement against the Army of the Potomac, which resulted in the battle of Bristoe Station, on October 14th.

This New York episode in our career was always remembered as an experience of unusual pleasure such as is rarely accorded to a soldier. We were gratified at being selected for the service, as it was regarded as a special compliment to our reliability as soldiers. It was a picnic that lasted two months and a half, and aside from the fever and ague which we contracted at Fort Hamilton and which stayed with us during the remainder of our term of service, no more enjoyable trip could have been furnished us.

CAPTAIN MASON W. TYLER.

From a photograph taken in 1863 or 1864.

CHAPTER VIII

FROM FAIRFAX COURT-HOUSE TO BRANDY STATION

OCTOBER 16, 1863, TO MARCH 10, 1864

AFTER such an outing, it was hard work to settle down again to hardtack and salt pork, but every feast has its day of retribution. We now had to give up Fifth Avenue and return to the mud huts of Virginia. We reached Fairfax Station about noon, October 16th. It was raining hard. We disembarked and marched to Fairfax Court-House and went to bed in the mud. During the night it cleared and we resumed our march in the morning, going as far as Chantilly, where we rejoined the Sixth Corps and pursued our route to Gainesville and Warrenton. These are classic names in the history of the Army of the Potomac. It was from Warrenton that we left the Army of the Potomac to go to New York. So we were once more back at our starting point after a three months' absence, and our usual routine of picket and inspections and the making of returns commenced, and kept us busy.

In one of my letters, dated November 1st, from the vicinity of Warrenton, I write:

We are stationed on one of the highest hills in the neighborhood. We overlook the surrounding country for miles.

It is a fine prospect. Hills covered with a beautiful variegated foliage, now in the last stages of their summer glory, lie in all directions about us, except to the west, where the Blue Ridge commands a superior homage on account of its heights. This is a hilly country, and prettily situated farmhouses dot almost every mountain notch. The houses are small and the farms neglected. My company is scattered over half a mile of territory, and every little while I am interrupted by some one wanting to pass through the lines or a countryman desiring to sell something to the boys. Wood is scarce; we have to go a mile for our camp supply. Water also is scarce.

At the time of his advance to Bristoe Station, General Lee had done all that he could to destroy the railroad between Warrenton Junction and the Rapidan. He had burned the ties, taken up the rails and carried them away. Evidently General Meade had decided to winter his army upon the Rapidan. It would be strategically well situated for watching both the Valley of the Shenandoah on the west and the approaches to Washington east of the Blue Ridge. It was about sixty miles southwest of Washington and was connected by this one line of single-track railway. Near the point where the railroad crossed the Rappahannock, the Confederates had erected a fort, two redoubts, and several lines of rifle trenches, and these were held by two thousand men belonging to Early's division of Ewell's corps.

On Saturday, November 7th, the Sixth Corps left their camp near Warrenton at five o'clock in the morning, and marched fourteen miles to Rappahannock Station. Upon their arrival there they at once formed line of battle, and our division, under the command of General Terry, assaulted the redoubt and works and

carried them by storm. The assaulting column was led by Brigadier-Generals Russell and Upton, of the Sixth Corps, who in the most gallant manner conducted their men over the escarpment of the fort. By the free use of the bayonet and with clubbed muskets they overpowered the garrison, and captured more than 1700 men and seven pieces of artillery. The Second Rhode Island and Thirty-seventh Massachusetts were with Wheaton's brigade on the right of the line supporting the skirmish line composed of the Tenth and Seventh Massachusetts regiments.[1]

On November 8th we were awakened at four-thirty A.M., and marched at six, going with the Fifth Corps to Kelly's Ford, eight miles below Rappahannock Station on the river. We remained here until the 12th, and then returned to Rappahannock Station, crossed the river, and advanced to where we went into winter quarters.[2]

[1] See General Terry's report, O. R., xxix., pt. 1, p. 605.

In a letter to his parents dated November 8, 1863, M. W. T. wrote of the advance to Rappahannock Station: "We marched beside the track of the Culpeper Railroad a good deal of the way. Such a complete destruction as the Rebs have effected I never saw nor realized before. The rails are all carried off and the sleepers are burned. Four o'clock found us formed in line of battle, and the contest raged until long after dark, when the final charge was made into the Rebel works, taking their first breastworks, seventeen hundred men, and seven pieces of artillery, rumor says. It was quite a spirited little affair for a couple of hours, although most of the firing and fighting was done by the skirmishers, who were very strong. We lay on the right of the line supporting the Tenth and Seventh, who were on the skirmish line, but too far to the right to get the heaviest of it. We, however, could see the most of it, and the cheers of the combatants told us how the conflict was raging, and we knew very soon of our success after it was achieved."

[2] In a letter to his brother Henry, November 13, 1863, he wrote from Brandy Station: "I have been reading pretty much all day on 'Military Law and Courts-Martial.' Too much reading out here stretched on your back in your shelter low tents is not the best thing in the world to

General Sedgwick occupied a house owned by John Minor Botts[1] for his headquarters. I built my own house with a stone chimney this year; heretofore our chimneys had been of wood, thickly plastered with mud on the inside, and with a wooden barrel on top. They sometimes caught fire, but not often. At this time we belonged to the Second Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Corps.[2] My diary indicates an unusual amount

take. It is rather too apt to produce headache, etc. To be sure, writing sitting on the floor is not much more comfortable, but by varying the two I manage to get along. We have got into a miserable camp this time. It is so low where the company streets are situated that if it should rain a single day we should be swamped. Meanwhile, the boys are busy at work building log huts. The great trouble is that wood is so scarce that, like the Egyptians of old, it is making bricks without straw. . . .

"The Rebs had got all ready to go into winter quarters. They had built nice houses in this immediate vicinity that are now occupied by the First Division of our corps. They evidently were very much surprised at our coming on this side of the Rappahannock. The railroad is not destroyed, but left entire on this side, and every indication shows that they had settled down to a winter's quiet. I think it a great pity, now that we have got started, that we don't push right on to Richmond and drive them before us, and trust to the railroad, either this route or the Aquia Creek Line, to supply our wants after we get there. But that is not Meade, you know. He never risks anything, but often loses good opportunities by his caution. The army is in prime condition now, and would like to fight a decisive battle here. . . .

"You must excuse my writing with a pencil, but I have no ink, and I have to borrow so much for my government writing that I hate to borrow when I can help it. The drums are just beating for retreat. If you had to be drummed out to the notes of that infernal drum three or ten times a day, according as it happens, you would growl, I know, when you heard it beat. Accordingly, as I have just been out and attended roll call, I think I have done my duty by the drum this time, and may afford to be cool once more.

"After supper. I have just been feasting off from a big plate of cakes. They went right to the spot, I assure you. It is getting rather dark and I must close."

Another letter reads: "Brandy Station, November 15, 1863.

[1] Shown on War Map 87 (2) and (3). [2] O. R., xxix., pt. 2, p. 605.

of calling and sociability in the regiment during this month. One day I had a visit from Horace Binny, who was a captain on General Neill's staff. Another day Captain Hutchinson of the Forty-ninth Pennsylvania called. Captain Lincoln and I usually spent our evenings together either at his tent or at mine. On November 20th there was a baseball game between the Tenth and Thirty-seventh, and the Thirty-seventh won.

We kept hearing rumors that there was to be a move

My dear Parents: We have had rather an excited, uncertain sort of a Sunday. In the first place, it stormed so hard last night that our camp is all flooded, and the tents are mostly pitched in the midst of the many mud puddles that form our camp. It rained very hard until about ten o'clock this morning, up to which time we had all we could do to keep from being carried off bodily. Then it suddenly cleared off with a rainbow. Just as it cleared off, cannonading commenced over to the east of us, and within twenty minutes we received orders to pack and be ready to move at a moment's notice. So we packed, but hearing nothing further from the Rebs and their supposed attack we got orders to move camp, so we pitched on the side hill, rather than in the mud. By this time it was noon, and we received notice from the quartermaster's department that they had clothing ready to issue to the regiment. So we got our clothing, and ate dinner, and now I have managed to get time enough to write my Sunday letter. I have managed to read the *Independent* and *Congregationalist* at odd spells, while waiting for things to progress, and standing over the fire drying myself. Last night at sundown, the real old Saturday night feeling came over me, and I lay in my tent a good share of the evening, thinking in the dark, while outside it was raining hard. I thought of you gathered around your cheerful fireside, and with your work all laid aside for the pleasant Sunday books, and the papers in each and all of your hands. I could see you perfectly. I thought you looked very comfortable. I only wished I could step in on you for a moment, and a second thought told me I should disturb all that quiet repose, and as it was, we were both very peacefully enjoying ourselves. So perhaps it was best as it was. At any rate, I comforted myself with the thought. It is after dark. It seems as if the days grow dark earlier out here than they used to at home. My present accommodations are not conducive to long letters. If I had a desk to write on I should feel like writing another sheet, but as it is I have to sit like a Turk—cross-legged—and it is not very comfortable, so good-night. Ever your affectionate son, Mason."

of some sort. We had never attempted a winter campaign, and of course we were very incredulous about the possibility of such a thing, but it was finally attempted. On November 26th, Thanksgiving Day, we suddenly received marching orders. We were awakened at four A.M., breakfasted, packed and started at eight. We moved a half-mile, then we were halted, and the news of Grant's success at Chattanooga was promulgated to the army. Hooker and Thomas were also mentioned. We then proceeded on our way, but as it had recently rained, we were much troubled by muddy roads. Our Thanksgiving dinner was bread and butter. We made very slow progress, but kept at it persistently, and at ten that evening we found ourselves at Jacob's Mill Ford—having marched a distance of twelve miles. We remained over the next day at Jacob's Mill Ford to superintend the passage of the trains across the river.

On Saturday, the 28th, we started at one A.M., got under way at two, and overtook the rest of the corps at seven A.M. at Robertson's Tavern, where we united with the left of the Second Corps. The greater part of the day on Saturday was devoted to the making of a reconnoissance, conducted in the rain, which with the wind greatly delayed our operations. On Sunday, the 29th, we were awakened at four-thirty A.M., and our division was directed to go with the Second Corps and make a detour around the right of the Rebel position. We marched some ten or twelve miles through the woods until we struck the Plank Road. Meanwhile, the rain had ceased and it had cleared off cold. Our movements had been delayed so seriously by various mishaps that we were obliged to abandon all hope of surprising the enemy, and on Monday morning after a

careful survey of the situation made by Generals Warren and Sedgwick, it was decided to return to camp. At dark we moved back three miles and encamped in the woods.[1]

[1] This was the Mine Run campaign. Lee's army was "found to be spread out for some 20 miles over the country beyond the Rapidan, with the fords of that river imperfectly guarded. Meade's plan of operations contemplated a rapid movement of his own army by different routes, penetrating between the separated corps of his antagonist and fighting and defeating them in detail" (Bowen, p. 235).

At page 240, Bowen continues: "Having advanced as far as practicable without a conflict, General Meade disposed his army in front of the Run. . . . General Sedgwick with his First and Second Divisions was thrown well to the right, while his Third Division [Terry's] . . . was detached to co-operate with the Second Corps in feeling for a more vulnerable point to the left.

"Accordingly the men of the Thirty-seventh found themselves aroused at 1 o'clock in the morning of Sunday, the 29th, drew a small additional supply of rations, and before daylight were on their way, passing Robertson's Tavern, through to the plank road and beyond it, around the head of Mine Run, the advance skirmishing continually with the enemy's outposts and driving them back till near night, when General Warren, believing that he had found a comparatively weak point, so reported to Meade and disposed his forces for the attack whenever it should be ordered. General Sedgwick from the right also reported that he deemed an assault in his front practicable. General Warren was strengthened with two divisions from the Third Corps and directed to attack at 8 o'clock next morning in connection with a heavy artillery fire from the centre, while Sedgwick was to 'go in' an hour later.

"The Thirty-seventh were in reserve during the night of the 29th, lying on their arms and sleeping as much as possible in the intense cold, which had now become so intolerable that men were frozen to death on the picket line. Early in the morning the regiment was moved forward to the front line, taking position on the extreme left. It was terribly uncomfortable lying upon the frozen ground hour after hour waiting for the signal to spring to their feet and dash forward into the face of death, and the men would almost have welcomed the command, since it would have stirred the blood and warmed the benumbed limbs, but it did not come. The morning's inspection of the works in his front revealed to Warren that his intention to attack had been anticipated. . . . The plan of attack which on the previous afternoon had seemed feasible was now seen to be hazardous to the degree of rashness, . . . and reluctantly

We rested in a forest of pine the next day. It was a wild November scene; God's canopy overhead, the sighing of the pine branches in the chill autumnal winds, make it memorable through the long years that have intervened.

Frank Walker dropped in upon me that morning, and was cheery as usual. On Wednesday, we resumed our march. In a letter written home at this time I say:

I suppose we are somewhere in the vicinity of Verdierville, fourteen miles from Orange Court-House. But I know nothing except as I judge from the distance and direction we have marched. In fact, no one in the brigade seems to know exactly where we are. The fact is, we have moved all ways, north, south, east, and west, until even our brigade commanders are at a loss to know our whereabouts. Day before yesterday General Eustis could n't tell within ten miles of where we were.[1]

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the orders were issued which should record upon the movement the verdict of 'failure.'

"All day the Thirty-seventh remained in their uncomfortable position, the skirmishers and sharpshooters in front keeping up an incessant fusillade, though by rare good fortune the loss was only one or two men wounded."

The advanced position of the Third Division, Sixth Corps, is shown on War Map 87 (1).

[1] The letter here referred to, dated "Camp-in-the-Woods, December 1, 1863," is addressed to his parents, and continues: "I have not written since we started because there has been no chance to send or to write. Thanksgiving morning we started and moved through mud very slowly until about ten P.M. when we crossed the Rapidan at Jacob's Ford. We stopped at the ford Friday. Friday afternoon the Third Corps, reinforced by one division of our corps, had a small fight with the Rebs, about three miles from where we were, and we, meanwhile, were in line of battle ready to fight if called on. Friday night we started about twelve o'clock, and marched until about eleven o'clock Saturday through the rain and mud, when we came up with the enemy, confronted by the Second Corps, in the immediate vicinity of Mine Run, as near as I can find out. We stayed there Saturday. Sunday morning our division

On Tuesday, December 1st, after we had nice large fires going and were thinking of being very comfortable for the night, we received orders at about eight-thirty P.M. to very quietly pack up and move. In five minutes we were on our way, and during the next three hours we made between ten and twelve miles. We were on the double-quick most of the time. It was very cold, hence running only warmed us. We crossed the Rapidan at Ely's Ford at seven A.M., December 2d. Then we rested. I slept two hours. We started again at noon and marched until dark twelve miles to Brandy Station, which was only four miles from our camp, where we arrived early the next day. We were tired and footsore, and very glad to get home; no rations that day, and only one meal the day before. The Mine Run campaign was the most vexatious we had experienced up to this time.

The Thirty-seventh had two men wounded during this expedition.[1] But if the orders to attack Lee in his entrenchments had not been countermanded, I fear that it would have been classed with Fredericksburg and Cold Harbor, among the blunders of the Army of the Potomac.

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was ordered to join the Second Corps, and with them we marched all day Sunday, moving about twelve miles, around the right flank of the Rebs. When we halted for the night we were said to be only two miles distant from our starting point. We made a wide detour.

"We stopped yesterday in line of battle all day, within a mile of where we halted Sunday night, expecting an attack every moment. There was some cannonading going on all day, and occasionally a stray shot would come whizzing over our heads. Now and then there was a man wounded. There was only one man wounded in our regiment. At night they moved us back three miles, and here we are this terribly cold morning 'in the woods,' making big fires and trying to keep warm. I am in tip-top health and spirits. I carry my own knapsack, weighing about twenty-five pounds."

[1] O. R., xxix., pt. 1, p. 684.

We were hardly settled in camp when we began to hear rumors of further movements. The fear of such movements perpetually haunted us. This was the army bugaboo. We lived in constant expectation of orders to move. And I don't believe there is any place where rumors start so easily and grow so fast as they do in the army. The air was full of them the greater part of the time. As was usually the case, this particular rumor of a movement did not materialize. It was not many days, however, before we did move our camp a short distance, and we were informed that we might build with the expectation of spending the winter. I had already built two houses with that expectation, and now went to work to build a third.

December 8th, Tuesday, was very cold. I was up early to move timbers and build a winter hut. I built the best chimney in camp. Axes were scarce, everybody was building. That night I slept on poles, took cold, and was sore and stiff for several days. To be sure, these houses were not very elaborate, but we found them very comfortable. They were twelve feet long by seven wide, and made of split logs with the cracks filled with mud, with a chimney made of stones or wood at one end. The roofs were made of the shelter tents which we used for tents when we were engaged in the campaign. Our beds were in the form of bunks, two tiers in height, with poles to sleep on. They were located at the end of the house opposite the fireplace, and the poles when covered with blankets made comfortable beds. In the middle of one side of the house there was a table improvised from cracker boxes, and in front of it a bench made from a log and used for a settee.[1] I

[1] In a letter to his parents, dated "Camp near Brandy Station, November 19, 1863," he wrote: "I have built myself a very cozy house

sent home and had them send me a volume of Blackstone, with which I whiled away some of my leisure hours, and they also sent me *Les Miserables*, a copy of *Corinne*, *Charles O'Malley*, and Napier's *Peninsular War*, so that I had no lack of good literature.[1]

During the month of December I had an attack of malarial fever, which sent me to the hospital for a few days. But aside from this, I was able to perform all the duties that were required of me. We lived very comfortably this winter. My diary speaks of large supplies of oysters being sent to the army from Wash-

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with a stone fireplace at one end, and a small table, at which I am writing, and a good bed that occupies nearly half the tent. We built the bed for three in anticipation of Lieutenant Harris's return."

[1] In a letter to his mother, from Brandy Station, January 31, 1864, he wrote: "It has been a pretty busy week to me. Busy not with my military labors, but with self-imposed labors and pleasures. I have read two stories. Early in the week I began *The Old Curiosity Shop*, and finished it Thursday. Then yesterday I finished *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which I consider one of the best and most powerful stories I have ever read. I am accomplishing a good deal this winter in the reading line, and enjoying it much, too. The fact is, I sit in my tent and read the most of the day, except when I am occupied with my camp duties, which only occupy me two or three hours a day. I rarely go to bed before twelve o'clock, because if I do I am sure to lie awake in the morning. So this makes me quite a long day. Sometimes we get up a game of ball, and now we have some apparatus for gymnastics, that occupies some of my time.

"Quite often, the early part of the evening, I engage in a game of chess or checkers or whist, until about nine o'clock, when I go to reading again.

"So I have given you a pretty good account of how I spend my time. You can imagine that I devote some time of each day to writing letters. That I usually do in the evening.

"Last evening about eight o'clock we received the summons from the colonel to repair to his tent, and going over found his table spread with all sorts of delicacies from home, and he invited us to partake in commemoration of his birthday. So we spent a jolly hour with the colonel, and then returned to our tents."

ington. We always had an abundant supply of soft bread furnished by our commissaries when we were in winter quarters. Borden's condensed milk in cans was one of the luxuries invented at this time for our delectation and comfort.

During the month of January I spent a few days in Washington, and while there I was taken to the White House by Mr. Washburn, our representative in Congress, and presented to President Lincoln. I have no recollection of what was said at the interview, but the fact that I saw him during that visit is indelibly stamped upon my memory, as it was the only occasion when I shook hands with him. During this visit I met General Caldwell at the Metropolitan Hotel, and he invited me to dine with him. The General was very free in his criticisms of men and measures. He was a man of superior literary tastes. Among other things he advised me to read Austin's *Jurisprudence*, for the mental and legal training that the book afforded.

As the winter progressed, wood for camp use grew very scarce. Every cord that we used had to be drawn by teams from two to four miles. Under these circumstances we had to be very economical in making fires, and sometimes we were cold. Our picket line was six miles distant from our camp, and the picket details were made for a week each, so that the men might not have to go out too many times in the season. I think I was not detailed for picket duty more than twice during the entire winter. The rules applicable to picket duty were very strictly enforced, and every precaution was taken to avoid a surprise. The corps officer of the day was in the habit of spending a good deal of time during his tour of duty on the lines, and woe betide the sentinel that was inclined to be lax in the performance of his

duties. No effort was spared to make the pickets alert, and as a consequence there was little rest for either the officers or the men during the week that they were detailed for such service.[1]

Three times during this season I was favored with a box of dainties from home, and the men in the company were also remembered and favored in the same way. We had a thirty-pound turkey sent down to us, which was the wonder of the camp. And no dish that was ever concocted was quite so palatable as the mince pies which, during that winter, they sent us from home.

Our camp amusements also were some of them very homelike. Our chaplain used to hold spelling contests, and we had a debating club that was very well patronized. The chaplain had a small building which, after the fashion of New England, he used for both church and school purposes. Here the voice of prayer and song were heard. Music exercises a strange spell over

[1] In a letter to his parents from Brandy Station, February 5, 1864, he wrote:

"I have been out on picket during the last week, so that you have not got your accustomed supply of letters this week, and I am afraid I shall not write a very long one this time, because I am very tired with being up a good deal nights, and marching six miles in coming back to camp. For our picket line is out some six miles. . . . The first day I was out there, there was a very heavy mist, and that night we had quite a severe thunder storm, the first of the season. We had no tents up, and nothing but rails over us to keep the rain off. I, however, kept dry by dint of my rubber overcoat. I slept passably well that night, and at three in the morning, when I had to take my turn at watching, the rain had ceased, and the wind begun to spring up quite cold. Wednesday it was sunny, but cold and windy. We built enormous fires from the oak and maple trees around us, and kept very warm indeed, in fact at our fire alone we kept one good chopper busy cutting down timber and piling it onto the fire. We burned at the rate of about a cord and a half a day. The line that I had command of was almost two miles long, so that it gave me something of a job to go through the length of it once a day. While out on picket I read Bulwer Lytton's *Rienzi*."

the soldier. We had many fine bands which cheered and inspired our life in camp. A man named Stearns in Company F, who usually answered to the sobriquet of the "old hoss," had a wonderfully clear and penetrating voice, and often when everybody was exhausted, in the loneliness of our night and forest marches, he would make the woods ring with a strain of music that seemed to be audible for miles, and gave new life and encouragement to the weary soldier.

During this winter the officers in the regiment drew lots to determine the order in which they would take their leaves of absence, and my lot gave me the eighteenth turn. It looked very doubtful whether I could get my leave, and finally I went without it. During March and April I was engaged in court-martial, and most of the time was acting as Judge Advocate. I was glad to have this experience, as I had decided to make the law my profession, and the experience that I acquired in trying these cases was of some value to me in after years. It gave me some experience in examining witnesses and eliciting testimony. It also brought me in contact with the field officers of other regiments, and enabled me to make many pleasant acquaintances. Our court-martial sat at the headquarters of the Vermont brigade, and there was no better brigade in the army.

Several of our classmates took advantage of Captain Lincoln's and my presence in the army to get a taste of army life. Dr. Shepard was studying dentistry, and to get a little experience in the line of his profession, he came down to the army and made us a visit, and we got the quartermaster to furnish him a tent and he practised on our teeth for nearly a month. He thus did us a favor and benefited himself, at the same time.

M. F. Dickinson[1] promised to come down and spend a couple of weeks with us, but he delayed so long that when he arrived at Washington the army was ready to move, and the government officers at Washington were refusing passes to all applicants who wanted to visit the Army of the Potomac. We finally made an arrangement with our sutler to go to Washington and bring Dickinson down in the guise of a sutler's clerk. Another classmate of ours, by the name of Houghton, came to Washington about the same time, and he got through the lines as an employee of the Christian Commission. We five classmates spent our evenings together at either Lincoln's or my quarters during the greater part of the month of April, and had very jolly times.

From February 28th to March 4th, the Sixth Corps were engaged with the cavalry under General Kilpatrick in an unsuccessful attempt to release the Union prisoners held at Richmond. General Kilpatrick crossed the Rapidan at Ely's Ford, and then despatched Colonel Dahlgren with a picked force of five hundred men to try to enter the defences of Richmond and release the prisoners, while the Sixth Corps kept Lee's army occupied by a feigned attack on his lines in front of the Army of the Potomac. The following lines in my diary refer to our part in this fiasco:

February 27, 1864. Six A.M. arose and packed. Started at 9 A.M. Marched by John Minor Botts' house through Culpeper, and reached James City near Thoroughfare Mountain at 4.30 P.M. I saw an old man and three ladies who lived in a house near the picket line. They told me that flour was $250 a barrel.

My boots were very bad and out of shape, and the consequence was by the time we got to Culpeper, I had two

[1] A college classmate.

good blisters, one on each heel, and each as large as a walnut. But I stuck to it until we arrived at James City, where we stopped for the night. There, by means of bathing and soaking my feet and stockings, I slightly improved my condition. Just as I got settled supposedly for the night, I was detailed with one hundred men for picket duty. It required all my grit to submit and not to shirk or ask to be excused. So I limped up and down that picket line all that weary night.

February 28, 1864. Slept four or five hours last night. Am very lame this morning. Returned to the regiment about 8 o'clock and started to march at 9.30. Reached Robertson's River (a distance of eight miles) about one, and stopped to build a bridge. About 2 P.M. we crossed and bivouacked for the night. Torbert's brigade was in the advance, and occupied Madison Court-House. All the rest of the corps, with the exception of our brigade, stayed on the other side of the river.

Monday, February 29th, we rested, and found it pleasant. Early in the morning, Custer with his cavalry started out and we were to wait for his return before we could turn our faces homeward. Monday night it commenced to rain. I took no shelter tent with me on the reconnoissance, and so had to lie in the open and take it as it came down, filtered by some rails which we put over us.

March 1st, Tuesday, was a very disagreeable day. Rain and mud with a cold air beat pitilessly on man and beast. About 5.30 P.M. Custer and his cavalry appeared, and we waded and ploughed through the mud and the dark until we found a proper place on the north side of the river, and there encamped for the night. We kept up good fires and managed to be tolerably comfortable. We could hear distant firing. But the wagons that had our blankets were not to be found.

Consequently, the officers in our brigade spent a sleepless night. We gathered around large fires and told stories, and the drinkers drank whiskey, and we waited for the dawn. It cleared off during the night, and became cold.

March 2, 1864. Some twenty or thirty darkies passed by us this morning in all sorts of rigs, and in all sorts of sizes, with a great variety of property. Our marching column started about 7. We marched very rapidly. About 3 P.M. we reached Culpeper. Marched through the town to music. Arrived at our camp about 5 P.M., having made twenty-three miles. You can hardly imagine how good a log cabin feels after such an expedition. Words cannot describe how hard I slept that night. Two almost sleepless nights and a long hard march in the mud made me unusually tired, and I went to sleep and slept eleven hours.[1]

Meanwhile, on March 10th, General U. S. Grant had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general, and appointed commander-in-chief of all armies in the field. He had the prestige of success in the West, and he brought with him to his new field of operations the reputation of being always ready to fight, of having won Vicksburg by his brilliant strategy, and conquered at Chattanooga by his indomitable courage. He was now to be matched against the ablest commander that the war had produced. We knew that it meant a battle royal, but we had no conception of what was before us. The past was mere child's play in comparison with what we were now to encounter. Little

[1] A note in M. W. T.'s handwriting on the margin of his copy of Bowen's history remarks: "I marched on this expedition with a blistered heel, and the scar still remains. My boots did not fit well, and chafed my heel, until the last day I limped on my toe the twenty miles."

did we reck that within thirty days after the campaign opened fifty thousand of our comrades would be numbered among the killed and wounded.

General Grant commenced by reorganizing the Army of the Potomac in three infantry corps, to wit, the Second, Fifth, and Sixth, and one cavalry corps under command of General Sheridan, and maintained the Ninth Corps as a separate organization under command of General Burnside. The First and Third Corps organizations were discontinued, and the regiments from these corps were transferred to the corps whose organizations were retained. By this operation Eustis's brigade became the Fourth Brigade of the Second Division of the Sixth Corps, and General George W. Getty became the commander of that division.

CHAPTER IX

THE WILDERNESS

MAY 4, 5, AND 6, 1864

THE Thirty-seventh had now been in the service twenty-one months. Considering the fact that it had borne its part in five such battles as First and Second Fredericksburg, Salem Heights, Gettysburg, and Rappahannock Station, its percentage of loss had been remarkably low. We began to regard ourselves as favorites of fortune. We were exposed for hours at Salem Heights, yet bullets seemed to avoid us. At Gettysburg, on the afternoon of the second day, we were waiting for the order to wade into the bloody shambles of the Wheatfield, when the firing ceased; and on the third day, we arrived at the point of danger just in time to see the enemy throw down their arms and submit to capture without our firing a gun. Now, however, we were to bear our full share of the losses, to see our regiment dwindle in twelve months from a body of 650 men until it could scarcely muster 150 men for service in the ranks.

It is a singular circumstance that Grant should have been caught in the trap that had proved such a fatal snare to all the hopes of Hooker. If ever a net was spread in the sight of a bird, Lee did it at the Wilderness, and Grant was the bird. The problem that Grant had

to solve was the transfer of his army, with its immense trains of ammunition and reserve supplies, from the line of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad to that of the Richmond & Fredericksburg Railroad. The latter road was easily protected and defended; the former was open to attack, and difficult of defence. But on the south side of the Rappahannock, for a distance of thirty miles above Fredericksburg, and with a uniform width of nearly thirty miles south of the river, lies the impenetrable jungle which we call the Wilderness. It is a country cut by deep ravines and sluggish streams. Here and there are cleared spaces, but for the most part it is tangled thicket, a wild, luxuriant forest growth, with a few narrow roads intersecting it, and concealed pathways hidden within its secret depths, known only to the natives of the region. Cavalry were useless here. Artillery could only be used in spots. The trains were an incumbrance because they occupied the roads and interfered with the movement of the troops.

In the recesses of the forest lurked our foes, using all the tricks and devices of savage warfare, crawling through the brush, shooting at us from concealed thickets, springing at us from trees and bushes, while the bullets from unseen guns and masked batteries prostrated our soldiers by the thousand. Human nerves were not made to stand the strain of such a warfare as this. A man can be brave as long as he can see his foe, but will quail and tremble in the presence of darkness and the goblins of the air. It was these unseen, imaginary forces that Lee was now summoning to his assistance. His army numbered a little over seventy thousand men, while Grant had a hundred and twenty thousand. He staked his all on winning with the smaller number against the greater number. He had

made it a drawn battle at Chancellorsville; now he was going to achieve victory. He had seen Hooker paralyzed by the mighty influence of fear. Why should not Grant succumb to the same potent force? He came very near proving that his judgment was sound.

Colonel Long, in his memoirs of Robert E. Lee, at page 327, writes:

> The writer spent the night of the 4th at Lee's headquarters, and breakfasted with him the next morning. The General displayed the cheerfulness which he usually exhibited at meals, and indulged in a few pleasant jests at the expense of his staff officers, as was his custom on such occasions. In the course of the conversation that attended the meal he expressed himself surprised that his new adversary had placed himself in the same predicament as "Fighting Joe" had done the previous spring. He hoped the result would be even more disastrous to Grant than that which Hooker had experienced. He was, indeed, in the best of spirits, and expressed much confidence in the result—a confidence which was well founded, for there was much reason to believe that his antagonist would be at his mercy while entangled in these pathless and entangled thickets, in whose intricacies disparity of numbers lost much of its importance.

When Lee saw Grant starting for the fords of the Rapidan, he knew that he would very soon be enmeshed in the heart of the Wilderness, and he hurried his forces from their various encampments on the line of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, and brought them up in front of the Army of the Potomac to drive it back to the Rapidan, as he had previously done when Hooker was in command.

The Second Corps had crossed the Rapidan at Ely's Ford, and was advancing on Chancellorsville. The

Fifth and Sixth Corps had crossed at Germanna Ford, and were moving towards Wilderness Tavern. The important thing was to keep possession of the roads. Once entangled in the Wilderness the army could neither march nor fight. In many places you could not see the length of a company. The main roads running east and west were the Orange Turnpike and the Orange Plank Road. These were crossed by the Germanna Ford Plank Road, the Brock Road, and several other small byways whose general direction was north and south.

At midday of May 5th, the situation of the contending forces was as follows: South of Wilderness Tavern, Ewell attacked Warren's corps on the turnpike, and the First and Third Divisions with Neill's brigade of the Sixth Corps went to the assistance of Warren, and these two forces fought fiercely with each other the most of the afternoon. A few miles farther to the southeast, Hancock was recalled from Todd's Tavern to meet three brigades of Getty's division of the Sixth Corps[1] at the junction of the Brock Road with the Orange Plank Road, and stop Hill's advance. Longstreet was still many miles away at Gordonsville.

The following extracts from the Official Records will explain the happenings to our division. General Getty says in his report, dated May 5, 1864 (O. R., vol. xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 676):

About 12 M., orders being received from Major-General Meade, commanding Army of the Potomac, to hasten out to the junction of the Orange Court-House and Germanna Plank Roads to support the cavalry, who were being driven

[1] On May 5, 1864, the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Regiment was in the Fourth (Eustis's) Brigade, of the Second (Getty's) Division, of the Sixth (Sedgwick's) Corps. (See O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 112.)

in from Parker's Store, the division marched rapidly out on the plank road for a mile and then took the Brock Road, which crossed the Orange Court-House Plank Road a mile in advance of the Germanna Plank Road, instead of the latter. On approaching the crossroads our cavalry was found hastily retiring. Hastening forward, with my staff, I reached the crossroads just as the enemy's skirmishers appeared rapidly advancing to gain possession of this point. The presence of my small retinue, consisting of my staff and orderlies, standing firmly at the point in dispute, although under fire, served to delay their advance for a few minutes, during which Wheaton's brigade (the First) was brought up at the double-quick, faced to the front, and a volley poured in, which drove back the enemy's advance. Skirmishers were then immediately deployed, and advanced a few hundred yards, until they encountered the enemy's skirmishers. The Rebel dead and wounded were found within 30 yards of the crossroads, so nearly had they obtained possession of it. Prisoners taken here reported Hill's corps with Heth's division in advance on the Orange Court-House Plank Road, advancing. I immediately forwarded this information to Major-General Sedgwick, then commanding the corps. The division was formed in two lines at right angles to the Orange Court-House Plank Road, with Wheaton's brigade on both sides of the road, Eustis on the right and Grant's (Vermont) brigade on the left. In obedience to orders several attempts were now made to establish connection with the left of the Fifth Corps, but without success, owing to the fact that the enemy were in force between the division and that corps. For two hours now, save the constant fire of the skirmishers, everything was quiet. Enemy were evidently getting into position and forming their lines.

At 3.30 P.M. the head of Hancock's column (the Second Corps) came up on my left by the Brock Road, and as rapidly as possible were forming on the left of the division. Wheaton's brigade was now placed wholly on the right of

the road. At this juncture orders were received from Major-General Meade, commanding the Army of the Potomac, to attack at once without waiting for the Second Corps. This order was reiterated by Colonel Lyman, of General Meade's staff, in person. Accordingly the division advanced at once. A section of artillery from the Second Corps, under Captain Ricketts, was planted on the plank road, advanced with the lines, and did good service. Enemy were found in strong force immediately in front. Their lines outflanked the division, and though forced back some distance in the centre, they held in the main their ground and repulsed every attack. The fighting was very heavy. About 5.30 P.M. the enemy charged and forced back our line some fifty yards, when they were checked and repulsed. On the plank road they got up to, and planted a color at, one of the guns of Ricketts' section, which, the horses being killed, could not be withdrawn, but were immediately driven back, and the gun retaken by a charge of portions of Grant's and Wheaton's brigades. It was with the utmost difficulty and only by the most stubborn fighting and tenacity that the division could hold its ground, outnumbered and outflanked as they were by the whole corps of A. P. Hill. But the Second Corps, at length getting into position, advanced on the left and to a great extent relieved the pressure on my lines. Very heavy fighting, however, without either gaining or losing ground, was kept up until after dark. The division was then relieved by troops from the Second Corps and withdrawn from the front lines.

General Meade, in his official report (O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 189), says:

One division (Getty's) of the Sixth was sent to the Orange Plank Road, where the Brock road intersects it, to hold this crossing at all hazards till the arrival of the Second Corps, ordered up from Todd's Tavern. About noon Major-General Warren had gotten into position on the pike and

attacked vigorously with the divisions of Griffin and Wadsworth. This attack was at first quite successful, Griffin driving the enemy (Ewell's corps) some distance back on the pike, but, as, owing to the dense thicket and want of roads, the Sixth Corps had not been able to get into position, Griffin's flank was exposed as he advanced, which the enemy taking advantage of, Griffin was compelled partially to withdraw, having to abandon two pieces of artillery. Wadsworth was also driven back. In the meantime Crawford's division, which had the advance in the morning, was withdrawn to the right towards the pike and was formed on the left of Wadsworth, one brigade advancing with Wadsworth. When Wadsworth was compelled to retire Crawford was for a time isolated, but was drawn in, not, however, without the loss of many prisoners. Getty, on arriving on the Orange Plank Road, found our cavalry being driven in by Hill's corps, and had just time to deploy on each side of the road, delivering a volley into the advancing enemy, which checked his progress until the arrival of the head of Hancock's column at about 2 P.M. So soon as Hancock arrived he was directed to attack with Getty, which was done at first successfully, the enemy, however, offering stubborn resistance. Mott's division, Second Corps, gave way, when Brig.-Gen. Alexander Hays, in going to repair the break in the line, was shot dead while gallantly leading his command in the thickest of the fight. The enemy's columns being seen moving over to the Orange Plank Road, Wadsworth's division and Baxter's brigade of the Fifth Corps were sent in that direction to take position and attack in conjunction with Hancock. They did not arrive, however, in time before dark to do more than drive in the enemy's skirmishers and confront him. Toward evening the Sixth Corps made its way through the dense thicket and formed connection with the Fifth, but nothing decisive was accomplished by either corps.

That night of May 5th we slept in the woods in a

thickly wooded ravine a short distance in front of the place that we had occupied for a line of battle during the afternoon. Colonel Edwards was very uneasy because we were on the right of the line occupied by our division, and we had not as yet found out the position of the Fifth Corps; he directed me to take a file of five men, and find out the location of the Sixth Corps in its relation to the Fifth Corps and report at once, so that the regular picket lines could be established, covering our whole front.

I selected Sergeant Graves of Company F, who was an experienced backwoodsman and surveyor, to go with me, and with four others, we slowly and carefully felt our way through the woods until we came in contact with the Fifth Corps encampments. We then went back and made our report to Colonel Edwards, and pickets were established connecting our lines with theirs. Fortunately we did not run into the enemy's line, and owing largely to Sergeant Graves's experience as a woodsman, we were entirely successful in accomplishing what we had undertaken. Sergeant Graves was killed the next day. A braver soldier or a truer patriot than he was did not exist. He left his home and family to serve his country, and at a good deal of sacrifice to his own personal interests. He was a man of education and culture, and he gave it all to his country. I suppose that I was selected to establish this connection between the Fifth Corps and our division because of the fact that I had achieved some reputation of keeping watch of our movements and calculating where we were. I always carried a compass, and always had good maps, and by watching the direction of our various marches with my compass, and marking them out upon the maps, I could generally

tell with tolerable accuracy where we were at any given time.

The next morning, May 6th, we arose at four and breakfasted and were ready to move by half-past five. As we had held the advance on the previous day, we were placed in the second line of battle, and the Second Corps were in front of us. Our business was to follow the advance and be ready to take our place in the first line of battle, if at any time the first line needed assistance or support. During the next two hours our progress was steady and sometimes rapid. We drove the enemy before us for a distance of a mile and a half and everything seemed favorable to a complete success on our part, when suddenly the first line of battle gave way and came rushing to the rear. We lay down and let the line pass over us and then arose and poured volley after volley into the woods in our front. We could not see the foe. They were hidden in the thickets and behind the trees. A short distance to our left we saw General Wadsworth rally his division of the Fifth Corps, and meet his death in the same blind passages of the forest. At the same time we saw the Fifty-seventh Massachusetts, with their intrepid leader, Colonel W. F. Bartlett, at their head, throw off their knapsacks and charge rapidly into the woods on our left. General Wadsworth had called on one or two regiments, not of his division, the Thirty-seventh being one, and the Twentieth Massachusetts another, to go forward with him and his division and try to check the Rebel advance upon our left flank. General Wadsworth afterwards personally thanked Colonel Edwards for his efficient support. But in rendering this assistance, the Thirty-seventh got separated from the rest of Eustis's brigade, and when Wadsworth fell, we

were deserted by his division, which fled in great disorder.

Our losses were heavy. In a very short time something like 134 officers and men from our regiment were numbered among the killed and wounded, and we could scarcely see where the bullets came from or where the foe was hidden. In a very short time the firing ceased, but the enemy's advance was checked and our regiment was alone, unsupported. The balance of Getty's division seemed to have retreated with the Second Corps. The only Federal troops in our immediate vicinity were a brigade belonging to the Second Corps, commanded by General Joshua T. Owen. As the firing in our front seemed to have ceased for the time, General Owen and Colonel Edwards held a consultation and decided that they did not want to withdraw from their advanced position without orders, and as General Owen was the ranking officer and had lost his entire staff, I was detailed at his request to act as his staff officer, and directed to go back through the woods to the headquarters of the Second Corps and report the position of these two commanders and ask for instructions.

I had a long and tedious ramble, but after wandering back through the woods a mile and a half, I finally succeeded in finding the headquarters of the Second Corps, and reported to General Hancock the situation of General Owen's brigade and of Colonel Edwards's regiment. I met there my friend Colonel Walker. As I was on foot, he immediately dismounted an orderly and gave me his horse, and sent me to report to General Birney, because General Owen belonged to his division. I got to General Birney's headquarters, and made my report, and Birney immediately detailed one of his staff officers to go with me and bring out General Owen's

brigade and the Thirty-seventh, and place them in their appointed position with the rest of the corps.

I started back with General Birney's staff officer, but before we had gone a great way, the bullets were so thick that we decided it was safer for us to leave our horses in charge of an orderly and go on foot to the position where the regiment was. One of Berdan's sharpshooters who was lost in the woods joined us here, and we picked up guns and acted as skirmishers advancing through the woods. I finally got to the place where I had left the regiment, but there was no regiment there, and after a consultation with General Birney's staff officer, we concluded to proceed a little farther to the right where we could hear firing, thinking that possibly the brigades for which we were searching might be there. We had only gone a short distance through the woods when we came upon the Rebel skirmish line advancing, who shouted at us to throw down our arms and surrender. I was a few feet farther to the right and immediately turned on my heel and sprang through the woods at a very rapid pace, losing my hat at the first jump, and escaping without further injury than a stiffened finger joint, caused by a musket ball which grazed my hand.

In July, 1865, after my return from the war, I picked up a copy of *Harper's Magazine* for that month, and my eye fell upon an article entitled "Eleven Months in a Rebel Prison," and upon reading it I found that it told the story of my unfortunate comrade, and his subsequent imprisonment. He took the chances of capture and prison: I preferred those of escape.

I ran until I was out of breath, and finally found that General Owen and Colonel Edwards had concluded not to wait for my return, but after a short stay, during

which they noticed a movement to surround them, they had returned to the line on the Brock Road, where the rest of the corps were already building earthworks and preparing for their last stand in the battle of the Wilderness. My return, hatless and somewhat dishevelled, to my regiment produced quite an excitement. They thought me captured or dead.[1]

[1] Colonel Edwards, in his memoir entitled "My Recollections of the Civil War" (manuscript, page 74), writes of these experiences:

"The Thirty-seventh in pursuance to General Wadsworth's orders charged to the rear until we had extricated ourselves from the embrace of the enemy, when we marched to the point where he had left the brigade.

"Though the history of modern war cannot show a more heroic charge, though color bearers fell dead and men dropped like dead forest leaves, though the charge was so determined that it was difficult to save the regiment, so reluctant were they to retreat,—yet it was only an episode of the three terrible days' struggle in the Wilderness, and it has never been duly chronicled save by Bowen in his masterly history of the war, entitled *History of the Thirty-seventh Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers*. The enemy out of respect to the dead hero sent his body into our lines under a flag of truce.

"After the charge we formed on the left of Owen's brigade, our left connecting with Mott's division. Owing to the surprise and shock of the charge of the Thirty-seventh the enemy did not attack in front of Owen's brigade, or of our brigade, and the brigade on our left, but the lines farther to our left were broken and Hancock changed front to his rear on his left and resumed his position on the Plank Road. This left our brigade and Owen's isolated, and the enemy were moving so as to cut us entirely off. I urged our brigade commander to move our brigade through the woods to join Hancock on the Plank Road, but he seemed paralyzed and asked me to command the brigade, which I did, retiring the brigade by the right of companies to the rear until the enemy pressed too close on our rear, when we reformed and repulsed the enemy. Owen then assumed command by virtue of seniority and asked me if I would communicate with General Hancock for orders. Captain Mason Tyler —always ready for heroic service—volunteered for this hazardous duty, and though the enemy were between us and Hancock, Captain Tyler reported to General Hancock, who ordered us to report at once to him on the Plank Road. General Hancock mounted Captain Tyler and also sent one of his staff with him. On their way to us Hancock's aid was

In the latter part of the afternoon, after due preparations had been made by the Federals to receive them, the Confederates came sweeping through the woods like a whirlwind. They captured a small part of our line, but were unable to hold it, and they were driven back with heavy loss.

Colonel Fox, in his *Regimental Losses*, p. 115, says: "The heaviest loss sustained by any division in any one battle, occurred in Getty's (2d) Division, Sixth Corps, at the Wilderness, where that division lost 480 killed, 2318 wounded, and 196 missing; total of 2994 men."

General Getty, in his report quoted above, describes the part taken by our division in the battle of the 6th of May, in the following language (O. R., xxxvi., part 1, page 677):

At 6 A.M., May 6th, the Second Corps attacked. This division formed in two lines on both sides of the Plank Road, Eustis on the right, Wheaton in the centre, crossing the Plank Road, and Grant on the left, advanced in support to Birney's division, Second Corps. The enemy were again encountered immediately in front, but after a short struggle were forced back. The troops pushed forward with renewed vigor. The enemy lost ground rapidly, and hundreds of prisoners came pouring in. A mile and a half in advance of the crossroads, Wadsworth's division, of the Fifth Corps, came sweeping in from the right, driving the enemy in great confusion and forming a junction with the troops which had advanced on the Orange Court-House Plank Road. All pressed on after the almost routed army. Having advanced three fourths of a mile farther a heavy

captured and Tyler, ordered to surrender, charged through the enemy and reported to me. The two brigades then moved in line towards the Plank Road. The enemy gave way before us and we reported to Hancock without further loss."

artillery fire was encountered from batteries on the left of the road, but masked by thick shrubs and pines. In compliance with orders from Major-General Birney, the division was moved wholly to the left of the Plank Road, but soon after, perceiving that there were but few troops on the right of the road, and that the enemy threatened to attack from that quarter, I moved Wheaton's and Eustis's brigades back to the right of the road. All this time we were steadily advancing, driving the enemy in some disorder, and capturing many prisoners, and had reached the point within half a mile of Parker's Store.

The threatened attack on the right now burst with great fury, the lines in front gave way, Wheaton and Eustis stepped into the gap, and by hard fighting held the enemy. Soon the extreme left was forced back. The enemy, it appeared, had brought up all of Longstreet's corps, and before the onset of these fresh troops, our men, fatigued and disordered by their long advance in line of battle through the dense and almost impenetrable thicket which covers all this tract, gave ground. This division was soon in the front line, but being outflanked by the breaking of the troops on the left, were forced back with the rest. Here I received a severe wound through the shoulder, and was compelled to leave the field, turning over the command of the division to Brig.-Gen. Frank Wheaton, the senior brigade commander present, Brigadier-General Neill, with his brigade, having been detached. . . . After a severe contest of some ten hours' duration our troops were forced back to their original position at the crossroads. The division, throughout all this fighting and falling back, held well together. Not a single regiment or organization was broken up. The brigade reoccupied nearly their original positions. Breastworks were hastily thrown up, and preparations made to resist the enemy's farther advance. At 4 P.M. he attacked, and made the most desperate efforts to break our lines, but was handsomely repulsed, and after a struggle of half an hour withdrew, leaving the ground in

front of our lines covered with the dead and wounded. Late in the evening the First and Fourth Brigades rejoined the corps, on the right of the army. . . . In wresting the possession of the crossing of the Orange Court-House and Brock Roads from Hill's corps, when already occupied by his skirmishers, it is not claiming too much to say, that the Second Division saved the army from disastrous defeat, for that point was of vital importance to us, and its falling into the hands of the enemy would have cut our army in two, separating the Second Corps from the Fifth and Sixth, and would have exposed to capture the Artillery Reserve, then moving up from Chancellorsville, on the Orange Plank Road. Throughout the terrible struggle that ensued, this division held the key-point of the battle-field—the Plank Road. Their losses, all from killed and wounded, and few or none, prisoners, show how tenaciously they fought.

In General Meade's report of the battle of the 6th of May, occurs the following (O. R., xxxvi., part 1, p. 190):

On the 6th, the attacks were made as ordered, but without any particular success on the part of either the Fifth or Sixth Corps. On the plank road the attack of Wadsworth's and Getty's divisions and Hancock's corps was quite successful, and the enemy was driven up the road in confusion and disorder for more than a mile, when, Longstreet's corps coming up, the tide of battle was turned, and our victorious line was forced back to its former position on the Brock Road, the gallant Wadsworth falling mortally wounded while exerting himself to rally the retiring columns. The brave Getty was also severely wounded early in the action, though refusing for some time to leave the field.

The cause of Hancock's retreat in the morning was

the arrival of Longstreet and his corps, after an all-night march from Gordonsville, and his sudden appearance through the leafy foliage of the forest, by an abandoned railroad cut in Hancock's rear. It was like an army of ghosts rising out of the earth. Such an apparition will unsettle the stoutest nerves.

The Second Corps was at this time the best seasoned and least likely to be panic-stricken of any corps in the Army of the Potomac, yet at the cry that Longstreet was in the brush on their flank, they ran to the rear like sheep, and to the best of my belief, they did not stop until they had reached the position on the Brock Road from which they had started in the morning. There they could see something, there they could move without being tangled in briars, there they had solid ground to stand on and could fight, and when the Rebels got there they found the Federals were not to be driven out, and in particular did not mean to be driven into the woods.

In going into the details of the panicky behavior of our comrades of the Second and Fifth Corps, I do not mean to claim any special exemption from the same influences producing in the Thirty-seventh the same results under like conditions, although I do claim that the Thirty-seventh was composed of men of unusual intelligence and was especially well disciplined for a volunteer regiment. I only remember one instance of their career as soldiers when they manifested any disposition to yield to a panic-stricken fear. That was on the afternoon of May 6th, when General Longstreet's corps moved forward to attack the Second Corps and Getty's division in the works which they had erected on the Brock Road, after being driven back from the morning's advance.

That afternoon's attack was preceded by a sudden, tremulous rustling of the leaves and boughs in the woods on the front, long before the enemy could be seen, which sounded like a mighty rushing wind, and I presume it was magnified by the condition of our nerves, and for the instant every man in the ranks behind the breastworks seized his gun and started for the rear, and only by the most strenuous exertions on the part of the officers was a rout prevented. It extended to the regiments on our right and left, and I presume was more or less continuous through the whole line, but in our case was stopped before the regiment had gone thirty feet to the rear of the works. The men were prevailed upon to let reason resume its sway and to return to their places behind the earthworks, and when the attack culminated they fought like heroes. In addition I may justly claim that the Sixth Corps was hardly ever in its entire history stampeded, nor did it yield to the terror of panic. The only instance which I can remember where it came very near to being panic-stricken was at Cedar Creek, where it was surprised by General Early and driven back some distance from its camp before it was able to rally, but it was never then beyond the control of its officers as were the soldiers of the Nineteenth and Eighth Corps on the same occasion.

Two or three of the brigades that belonged to the Sixth Corps came very near being routed on the evening of that same 6th of May, 1864, when General Gordon and General Johnston, with their brigades, surprised the brigades of General Shaler and General Seymour on the extreme right of the Sixth Corps and of the Army of the Potomac, just as the shades of evening were gathering, and captured the two brigadiers, and for the time succeeded in stampeding the brigades. The

stampede was, however, completely checked and controlled by the commanding presence and restraint exercised by General Sedgwick and General Wright, who promptly succeeded in stopping the rout and in restoring order in the corps.

On that very day, in the afternoon, Mott's division of the Second Corps had manifested a most unaccountable fright and refusal to be controlled, which is thus described by Colonel Swan in his account of the battle of the Wilderness (*The Wilderness Campaign*, Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, vol. iv., page 142):

> Till near night our troops as a general thing did all that could be expected of them, maintaining their advanced ground when they found they could do no more, although they knew of their substantial breastworks just in the rear. Then for some unaccountable reason Mott's division gave way. Colonel McAllister, who afterwards commanded the 1st brigade of that division, says "that to his great astonishment the line began to give way on the left. It is said first the Excelsior brigade, then my left regiment, the 1st Massachusetts, and regiment after regiment, like a rolling wave, fell back, and all efforts to rally them were in vain." "To assign a cause for it," he goes on to say, "would be impossible, unless it was from the fact that a large number of the troops were about to leave the service. I think this had much to do with it."

But here let me observe that in *all* this wood fighting our troops seem to have been greatly alarmed whenever the noise of a contest to the right or the left told them that there was fighting in the rear of a prolongation of their own line. Such noises seem to have caused more disturbance than a foe directly in front. And I think it was the same with the enemy's troops. However, the enemy at this time was not aware of our confusion.

It will be noticed that the instances here cited of panics are for the most part taken from experiences in the Wilderness, and the panic of the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps at Chancellorsville is another instance of the same kind, and due to similar causes. One of those causes is the tendency of the human mind to magnify dangers that cannot be seen or measured by human senses. If you can see a danger and actually apply the human reason to it you will be satisfied to use the best means and methods that your mind can suggest to meet the emergency, but if you cannot see it and you cannot reason about it, your only recourse is to run away from it, and where a crowd is involved it means a race for life.

The Confederate army had this advantage over the Northern army in dealing with such a situation. They were at home in their own country, and very large numbers of them knew every byway and path in the Wilderness, to say nothing of its roads, and knew just where to hide, and where to force the fight, and we were more or less subject to their control on account of this knowledge. It was this that made General Lee so confident that, if he could hold General Grant in the Wilderness, he could double the strength of his own army.

The writer whom I have quoted above further says, in reference to that part of the battle of the Wilderness which was fought upon the Brock Road (page 144):

> There are but one or two square miles upon this continent that have been more saturated with blood than was the square mile which lay in front of the Brock Road, and had the Orange Plank Road as a central avenue, in the two days of the Battle of the Wilderness. And this bloody field

differs much from those which have been its rivals as scenes of slaughter. Within a very limited compass in other battles thousands have fallen by the fire generally of artillery, not less than of infantry, as they pressed forward to take some fortified line; and the line once reached, the carnage has been awful. But here, although both parties had breastworks, the fighting was far from being confined to those breastworks. Nearly every square yard had its fill of blood, and on nearly every square yard was Northern and Southern blood intermingled.

And although the battle was fought with the hot sun of the month of May in Virginia glaring overhead, it was, as it were, fought in the night. Excepting the roads, the dense wood rendered it impossible for any soldier to see what was going on three rods from where he stood.

There was more at stake in the battle of the Wilderness than in any other battle between the Northern and Southern armies in the War of the Rebellion, with perhaps the single exception of the battle of Gettysburg. The Army of the Potomac had never won a decisive victory on Southern soil. McDowell, McClellan, Burnside, and Hooker in succession, and in each instance commanding a larger army with superior equipment, suffered humiliation and defeat from Southern generals commanding a ragged and half-starved army on Southern soil. The Army of Northern Virginia felt that under the leadership of Lee, backed by Longstreet, Stuart, and Hill, there was no Southern position they could not successfully defend, and no Northern army they could not defeat. They had implicit confidence in their leaders, and in fact, they had reason for their faith. Against great odds they had achieved victory after victory, and hardly tasted defeat.

On the other hand, the Army of the Potomac had suffered a long series of reverses, and were much discouraged by repeated defeats. In their whole career they had hardly tasted the joy of victory. Their leaders had disappointed them, and uselessly wasted their life blood and their vital energies. General Grant had achieved signal victories in the West. The national government in its straits now assigned to him the task of redeeming the reputation of the Army of the Potomac. It was a battle on Southern soil between Lee, with his skilled lieutenants and triumphant army on the one side, and Grant with the much larger Army of the Potomac, disheartened by repeated defeat, on the other side. The stake was the continuance of the United States as one nation if Grant won, or its division into two nations if Lee won. Gettysburg had marked the turn in the tide of the war in favor of the United States. Now Lee and his generals were going to make the supreme effort of their lives in an attempt to stop the flow of that tide southward and drive it back to the Potomac. They believed they could do it; and the North was so tired of the war, with enlistments stopped, the draft a failure, and the party of Peace-at-any-price constantly increasing, that in their dreams of success, the established and recognized Southern Confederacy loomed into sight behind the clouds. If they had succeeded in the Wilderness I cannot say that it would have ended as they anticipated, but it would have given the Union cause a terrible setback, and no man can say what might have resulted. The battle of the Wilderness was fought to a standstill on that square mile where the Brock and the Orange Plank Roads join.

The Thirty-seventh was for two days in the very thick of that fight. It never faltered. When lines of

battle were rushing wildly over them to the rear, they opened to let them pass, and then closed their ranks and moved forward against the foe, and stopped the advance. Amidst general disorder and wild dismay they stood or marched in solid ranks and obeyed orders as if they were on parade. That was the character of the regiment. They were soldiers drilled to act as a unit, and to obey, and if Colonel Edwards had ordered them to stand their ground at the farthest point of their advance on the Orange Plank Road, I believe they would have fired their last cartridge and sacrificed their last man.

CHAPTER X

THE SIXTH CORPS AT SPOTTSYLVANIA

MAY 7 TO 20, 1864

AFTER the terrible experiences of the last two days, we were tired enough to sleep, but no such good fortune awaited us. The Sixth Corps met with a serious loss early in the evening through the capture of two of its brigadiers and several hundred officers and men, and General Sedgwick demanded the return of the five brigades of his command which had been detached for duty at different points in the battlefield of the Wilderness. Three of these brigades under Getty were on the Brock Road. After Longstreet's last repulse we tried to secure a little rest behind the earthworks, but it was with guns in our hands, and almost in line of battle.

At ten P.M., May 6th, orders came returning us to the Sixth Corps. It was a dark night, and we stumbled along through the woods, dodging camps, corrals for horses, teams, and the camp followers, who are always in the rear of every army, and a little after midnight concluded we had better wait for the dawn rather than take chances of losing our way. So we dropped down in the woods where we were. We were up with the dawn, and by four o'clock had reached the place in the Sixth Corps assigned to us on the extreme right of the line.

At the place where we halted the country was slightly

elevated above the surrounding woods, but the woods were so dense and the trees so large, that the elevation was of little assistance in enabling us to see our environment. Everything in our front was so quiet that it gave rise to the report that the enemy had retreated in the night, but upon our attempt to advance our skirmish line, the Rebels were developed in force. We hardly had time to get breakfast before our regiment was sent to the right centre of the Sixth Corps to support a battery. It was posted on a hill, but the outlook was very limited in extent. However, they did not allow us to remain here long.

At two P.M., we returned to our position on the right and devoted ourselves to the delightful but arduous occupation of erecting earthworks; by night we had some fine ones, but we were then told that the army would move soon after dark. At ten P.M. we were ordered into line, and Spottsylvania was our goal. Lee and his army were still in our front; we had failed in our endeavor to drive them out of our way, now we were trying the efficiency of a flank movement.

Spottsylvania was fifteen miles distant in a southeasterly direction from where we were. Our orders, therefore, contemplated an oblique movement southeast and around the right flank of the hostile army. The transportation trains (supplies, hospital stores, equipment and ammunition) were started in the afternoon and sent in advance. The Fifth Corps was directed to go by the Brock Road, from which the enemy had apparently withdrawn their forces after the terrific fighting of the 5th and 6th instant, march to Todd's Tavern, and if practicable, proceed and occupy Spottsylvania Court-House.[1] They were to be followed by

[1] See War Map 81 (1).

the Second Corps by the same route. The Sixth and the Ninth Corps were to care for the trains and go by way of Chancellorsville, Aldrich's and Piney Branch Church, and the Sixth was to rendezvous with the Fifth Corps at or near Alsop's, northwest from the Court-House.

It was a night of sweltering heat. No rain had fallen for several days, and the many wheels and feet of horses and men pounded the dry soil into impalpable dust, which rose hundreds of feet into the air, and notified General Lee that our trains were under way in the afternoon, and of the direction of our movement. He immediately sent his cavalry to obstruct our progress over the Brock Road, and Longstreet's corps by a cross-road, to get in front of us and preoccupy the Court-House.

Both armies were badly fagged from want of sleep. The choking dust and the heat greatly aggravated their exhaustion. The Rebel army had this advantage, they were on their own soil, fighting for their homes, and were inspired with an almost superhuman energy, while our army, although they fully believed in the righteousness of their cause, were conscious that they were invaders, and had met with repeated defeats in all their previous attempts at invasion. Even the iron will of Grant could not overcome the influence of this fact. The result was that the Rebel cavalry succeeded in delaying our Fifth Corps, and Longstreet's corps got between our army and Spottsylvania Court-House, although they started a little later and had to march a little farther than our advance corps.

We of the Sixth Corps had a much longer distance to go, and the trains delayed us. Through the long watches of the night we shuffled a few feet at a time,

being choked with dust, stifled by the heat, and weary from lack of sleep. With the dawn (of the 8th), we halted at Chancellorsville for breakfast. Here we left the trains in charge of the Ninth Corps, and after a brief rest pushed on until three o'clock in the afternoon, when we joined the Fifth Corps near Alsop's.

Meanwhile, the last named corps had pushed forward, and two of its divisions had a fierce fight with Longstreet's corps, but failed in their attempt to reach the Court-House, and were driven back a mile or more, meeting the Sixth Corps at Alsop's.

General Sedgwick now took command of the field at this point, and towards evening made an attempt with the First and Second Divisions of the Sixth Corps and Crawford's division, the Pennsylvania Reserves of the Fifth Corps, to clear the obstructions in our front. Our lines were advanced from half to three quarters of a mile, and the enemy developed in such strong force that, owing to the approach of darkness, and the weariness of his men, he concluded it best not to force the fight, and withdrew his attacking lines a short distance. We lay down on our arms and passed the night (of May 8th).

During the night, Lee's entire army arrived and were arranged in a line of battle curving towards the north on the easterly side of the Brock Road so as to occupy a ridge of high land commanding the valley of the Ny, and facing north and east. This formed the famous Salient of Spottsylvania. The line, after curving towards the north, was bent until it ran towards the west, and again towards the south, crossing the Fredericksburg road a short distance north of the Court-House. It was half a mile across the Salient from east to west, and a mile in depth from its northernmost point

or apex to the line drawn across its base in extension of Lee's main line of defences.

This entire line of the enemy ran through the woods, with here and there an opening, but for the most part was hidden from view, except as our columns of attack, driving in the enemy's pickets, discovered a continuous heavily fortified line of breastworks, bristling here and there with cannon, and crowned with log protections for their heads and with loopholes underneath the logs for their guns, while in front a network of abatis and slashings tangled and delayed their assailants, and in many instances consigned them to a merciless doom. West of the Brock Road the enemy's line fronted on the River Po, and did not require such heavy defensive works. The Po, with its marshy and thicket-covered borderlands, was a sufficient protection against an attack.

In front of the line during May 9th, and at distances varying at different points from half a mile to a mile, was deployed the Army of the Potomac with its Second Corps at the right of its line; the Fifth Corps continuing the line to the Brock Road on its westerly side about a mile south of Alsop's; and the Sixth Corps continuing the line from the Brock Road in a northeasterly direction to a point in the woods three quarters of a mile northwesterly from the apex of the Salient. As I remember it, the Sixth Corps line on that day was mostly in the woods, and there was hardly a point on that line where the enemy's line of fortifications could be seen. Possibly some parts of it were visible from the Brock Road.

The point on that road where the Fifth and Sixth Corps lines joined, is a historic spot. It was there that General Sedgwick was killed at 9.30 o'clock of

this very morning of May 9th by the bullet of a sharpshooter fired from a distant tree. He was engaged in locating a battery when he was shot, and the bullet struck him under the eye, causing instant death. His death was a serious loss to the Sixth Corps, and to the Army of the Potomac. He was one of those solid men that everybody respected. His superior officers and associates leaned upon him; his subordinates had implicit confidence in him; his soldiers loved him. He was "Uncle John" to them. No one ever charged him with disloyalty to his commander; he was modest and unselfish. He was repeatedly asked to accept the command of the Army of the Potomac, but he always declined the honor. He exposed himself recklessly if the occasion required it, but when it came to the lives and the health of his men, he would not waste them, and he was always solicitous for their welfare, both on the march and in the camp. The day of his death was the saddest day the Sixth Corps ever knew, and the other corps recognized that the Army of the Potomac had lost a model soldier and corps commander.

To clear the woods as far as possible of sharpshooters in the trees, our artillery opened fire for a couple of hours, and vigorously shelled the woods all along the line. The shrieking of the shells, the crashing and tearing of the trees and limbs in the forest made a terrific noise. The cannonading seemed to me louder and heavier than that at Gettysburg. Meanwhile, during the day, we were fortifying and building earthworks of a formidable character for our protection.

General Wright of our First Division succeeded to the command of the Sixth Corps, and General David A. Russell (of the Third Brigade, First Division) was promoted to the command of the First Division in

General Wright's place. General Eustis was transferred and placed in command of the brigade lately commanded by General Russell, and Colonel Edwards was promoted to the command of our brigade, and Lieutenant-Colonel Montague to the command of the Thirty-seventh.[1]

Late in the afternoon, the Second Corps crossed the Po. The movement began with an attempt by Barlow's division to capture a wagon train, and developed into a flank attack by three divisions of the Second Corps. They spent the night on the south side of the Po, and in the morning of the 10th made such encouraging progress that they thought it might open the way to Spottsylvania Court-House.

Just then Hancock was ordered by Meade to recross the Po with two of his divisions, and with the Fifth Corps take charge of an assault to be made in front of the Fifth Corps line on the enemy's works. This assault failed, but in the meantime Hancock was obliged to return to the rescue of Barlow's division, which he had left south of the Po when he obeyed General Meade's order, and which, when deserted by the other two divisions, had been assailed by the force that Lee sent to drive back the Second Corps. This accomplished, at seven o'clock in the evening, he renewed his assault with the Fifth Corps, but accomplished nothing.

On that same day the Sixth Corps, under orders from army headquarters, had explored the enemy's fortified line in their front, so far as they were able to do so, and General Russell and Colonel Upton reported that they had found a place in the west face of the Salient opposite their front which they believed could be successfully

[1] See note at p. 142 above.

assailed. With the approval of army headquarters, General Wright had directed Generals Russell and Upton to select twelve regiments from the whole Sixth Corps for the assaulting column, to be led by Upton, and to be supported by General Mott's (Fourth) Division of the Second Corps, temporarily assigned to the Sixth Corps, and under General Wright's command. Colonel Upton selected three regiments from his own Second Brigade of the First Division, four regiments from the Third Brigade, First Division (this was Hancock's original brigade, and recently was commanded by Russell, and particularly distinguished itself at Rappahannock Station), three regiments of the famous Vermont Second Brigade, Second Division, and two regiments of Neill's Third Brigade, Second Division. Under cover of the skirmish line, General Russell, Colonel Upton, and the several regimental commanders carefully examined the ground and received exact instructions as to their respective parts and duties.

At the appointed hour, 6.10 P.M., Colonel Upton had his column formed in four lines under cover of the edge of the woods, and on a concerted signal, they marched and rushed across the intervening fields, drove in the pickets, and in almost solid array went over the fortifications, and after a desperate hand-to-hand fight, compelled the surrender of twelve hundred prisoners with six pieces of artillery and several stands of colors. They also captured an interior line of works which in a measure protected them from attack on the west and south. They made a breach in the enemy's lines of defence nearly a mile long. They held those lines until after dark, momentarily expecting the arrival of the supporting column under Mott, but for some unaccountable reason, it did not come.

I never fully understood why the other regiments of the Sixth Corps in this emergency were not sent to Upton's support. I know that the Thirty-seventh and our brigade started to go to their relief, although, at the time, we did not know of Upton's success or our destination, and after proceeding a half-mile or more, we were halted and shortly after returned to our starting point.

Finally, after three hours of occupation and most desperate fighting, Colonel Upton concluded that without assistance upon failure of ammunition, retreat or capture of his force was inevitable, and with General Russell's approval he withdrew. If he had been sustained, the terrible losses of May 12th might have been avoided. It was a better planned and better executed assault than that of the Second Corps on May 12th, and bitter were the reproaches to which both Russell and Upton gave utterance when upon Upton's return he gained the shelter of the woods. He had most successfully accomplished what he had undertaken, but at a heavy sacrifice of life, while those who were to support him had left him unaided to work out his own salvation and compelled him to surrender all the fruits of his achievement. For his gallantry on this occasion, he was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general.

The night of the 10th was one of restless wakefulness. We remained in the works with arms close at hand. There was desultory firing between the pickets in front of the respective lines. Four times during the night we were roused by alarms, and stood to arms. Not much rest in this; but we were so exhausted that we would drop asleep the moment they allowed us to lie down. It was an anxious night.

Wednesday, May 11th, was a day of comparative

rest and preparation. General Grant considering that the failure of Upton's assault was due to lack of co-operation, determined to renew the attempt on a much larger scale, and gave his directions accordingly to General Meade. The Second Corps was to be brought over from the right of the line in the rear of the Fifth and Sixth Corps after dark that night to an open space around the Brown and Landrum houses north of the Salient,[1] and with the assistance of the Sixth and Ninth Corps to attempt the capture of the Salient and the decisive defeat of the Rebel army at the dawn of the following day.

The historian of the Twentieth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers, George A. Bruce, at page 368 of his history, says of this order: "These few words of command resulted in one of the bloodiest battles in history, unique in character, sublime in the heroism displayed by the combatants of either side, which covered a small space of earth thicker with dead and wounded men than was ever seen on any battle-field in modern times."

It commenced to rain in the middle of the afternoon, and by evening it settled down into a storm which soaked the earth and drenched the foliage of the forest and enveloped the scene with a thick covering of mist and fog, which added much to the gloom and distress of the occasion.

General Hancock made such examinations as he could of the field of his action and of the works which were to be attacked, but he added little to his information in this way, and he was obliged largely to depend upon the reports of his guides and of the officers who viewed the works at close quarters on the skirmish line

[1] See War Maps 91 (1), 96 (3).

or in connection with Upton's attack. He directed the divisions of his corps, that had been given the opportunity to rest as far as it was possible during the day, to start from their camps under the lead of guides detailed for that purpose, in time to report at the Brown house, which General Hancock had selected as his headquarters, by 10 o'clock in the evening or very soon thereafter.

It was an awful march through the slimy, muddy soil of Virginia, the difficulties of which can only be appreciated by those who have experienced it under similar conditions. But before midnight the three divisions of the Second Corps had assembled in the vicinity of the Brown house, and were formed into two columns of attack, the one under General Barlow, and the other under General Birney, the latter supported by Mott's division, while Gibbon and his division were held in reserve.

The following graphic account of the assault on the 12th of May is taken from the History of the Twentieth Massachusetts Regiment above referred to (page 372):

For a long time this great column stood waiting for the word to advance. It was the largest body of men ever organized on the continent to be launched for a single blow. In it were twenty thousand men,—partly in solid mass, and partly in line,—five thousand more than Pickett led up Cemetery Hill at Gettysburg. Seventy-two regiments, representing the youth and manhood of ten States, the best that each could furnish, stood arrayed in battle order, upholding seventy-two battle-flags that had been borne in honor on many a field, and none of which had ever been touched by the hands of the enemy. These flags had been rent by shot and shell, and now, tattered and torn and wet with rain, were drooping around their shafts like the be-

draggled wings of a fowl. For twenty-four hours not one of these twenty thousand men had enjoyed a moment of sleep. Some of the strongest and bravest in the Twentieth dropped to the ground and were unconscious before their bodies touched it. Most, however, stood up in the ranks, swaying restlessly backward and forward, pulling their feet out of the mud and putting them back again, fretful, complaining, and ill at ease. From right to left they covered half a mile, in places twenty ranks in depth, and nowhere less than eight. The exact direction of the Salient from the Brown house had been ascertained on the previous day by the use of the compass, and the first division was so formed that it would strike the projecting point, provided it was able to go forward without deviation from the given course.

A great battle was about to be ushered in without the aid of artillery. There was neither drum to beat the charge nor bugle to sound the call. None of the accessories that usually accompany warlike forces and give to them a pomp and circumstance to fill the eye and feed the imagination were here. There were no officers on horseback, hurrying hither and thither, in front or on either flank, giving life, color, and animation to the field with their clattering sabres, waving plumes, and brilliant uniforms; neither were there any picturesque groups of them in the background. Every one was on foot, for all horses were left behind the lines. Barlow was in the centre of his massed division, while Birney, Mott, and Gibbon were stationed in the midst of their troops. So slight was the information given to General Barlow of the character of the ground over which he was to pass, that he inquired of Colonel Comstock, of General Grant's staff, whether or not there was a ravine a thousand feet in depth in front; and receiving no satisfactory answer, he concluded that he was about to lead a forlorn hope and gave his valuables and some messages to a friend.

After a delay of half an hour on account of the fog and darkness, at 4.30 the word was given for the movement to

begin. Until the Salient was captured no other command was given. The great column became its own commander-in-chief, for brigade and division generals being buried in the mass, it was impossible for them to give it directions by further orders. Still their presence was felt, for the men were conscious that their leaders were with them to share every danger. This alone was of no small value. When it grew lighter, and one could look around, and objects became visible, it was seen that the corps had been marched all night through mud and rain for something out of the common experience. The Second Corps had never before been massed into a solid body to move against the enemy, and never in such form as that in which it was now arrayed. Great events have a power of self-proclamation; and although nothing had been communicated to the troops as to what was expected of them, the feeling ran through the ranks that they were near to momentous happenings. All thought of what had gone before—want of sleep, fatigue, untold discomforts—was forgotten, and the manner in which the drama was to unfold and close was now the question of supreme interest. The warlike spirit was rising and became plainly visible. When half a mile out, the front line of Birney's division perceived that it was somewhat behind Barlow's column, and without orders quickened step and soon came up to a proper alignment. Near the Landrum house the enemy's pickets opened fire upon the flanking regiment, but without noticing them it passed along. As the woods on either side became visible, these landmarks showed that the true course had been kept, and the lines had been well preserved. When the column had ascended a low ridge that crossed its path, the Salient burst into view, with frowning forts and connecting rifle-pits, spaced off with traverses rising high above them. Down the slope in front was a line of abatis, formed of interlacing trees, whose branches had been cut and sharpened at the ends, presenting a formidable obstacle. But to men now wrought to a high pitch of enthusiasm and animated by a

sudden presentiment of victory, obstacles were not considered.

With loud cheering, the troops rushed forward, broke down and burst through the abatis, and in a moment the first wave of this human tide swept over the crest and dropped down on the farther side of the intrenchments. The men had seen much close and hard fighting, but now they were in the midst of the enemy and for the first time were making quick and sharp use of the bayonet and clubbed musket. But these were brave men that they sought to conquer, men who would not willingly drop their flag. They were the same who had been led by Stonewall Jackson; the same who broke through the line at Culp's Hill and held their ground for many hours with fierce tenacity; the same who met and held Warren's men in check on the 5th of May in the Wilderness. The contest was quick, sharp, and decisive. Many were killed and more were wounded; but being surrounded on every side by determined men, Johnson and his whole division, except a few that escaped, surrendered. Twenty guns, thirty flags, and four thousand prisoners were the substantial trophies of this assault. The Second Corps never had a prouder hour, unless it was at Gettysburg, where, holding a defensive position, the action was the reverse of this day's triumph.

There has always been much contention between the divisions as to which planted its flag upon the parapet first, but the difference in time was so slight that each was entitled to share alike in the honor.

Gibbon had been directed to remain in reserve; but either by new orders or a spontaneous impulse (probably the latter), the division followed close in the rear of Barlow and went over the works with his men. Carroll's and Owen's brigades were to the left of Barlow and broke in on Stuart's brigade, which was captured entire with its commander. Webb's brigade marched up into the space between Barlow and Birney and shared with the others in the capture of Walker's and York's brigades.

A gap in the centre of Lee's army had been made, a mile in extent, which gave promise for a time of a complete rout and overthrow of his forces. And now became manifest, at once, the effect of a condition deemed essential for the initiatory success of the movement, which rendered further direction difficult and unsuccessful. The hundred or more staff officers, who on their fleet horses would have been able to carry the necessary instructions quickly over a widely extended line, and, with their long experience and high intelligence, would have been so powerful a factor in bringing the troops into order, and arranging them for a further effective advance, were all afoot. Here in a small space in front of the captured works were twenty thousand men (less the killed, wounded, and a few stragglers), disordered somewhat by the march, more by the assault, now carried away by a sudden victory of unlooked-for proportions and thrown into confusion that required the promptest action to disentangle and reduce to an ordered array. The enthusiasm of a broken line resulting from a victory is only a little more efficient than the despondency of one broken by defeat. The officers commanding the divisions were capable men and knew what the situation demanded, but they were almost powerless. There was no one to carry their orders quickly or assist much in executing them. At such times as well as during a flight, one might well offer a kingdom for a horse, for he that is thus borne carries with him a dignity and authority that commands respect and wins obedience to his voice. The most potent and effective arm of the service being thus paralyzed or nearly so, the great corps, which we have seen acting as its own commander-in-chief during the assault, continued to follow its own impulse, which carried it forward in tumultuous pursuit of the enemy. Forward into the brush and woods the men went, and meeting part of Gordon's reserve division at the McCool house, they put Johnson's brigade to flight and followed on until the fortified line at the base of the Salient was reached. Here were two fresh brigades and

the rallied troops of Johnson. It would have been impossible for the disorganized pursuing force to carry it, and such an action was not attempted.

During this hour, so critical to the Army of Northern Virginia, men on horseback were swiftly flying to various parts of the line to bring up fresh and organized troops to meet the greatest danger that had ever yet threatened it. From Rodes's division came Ramseur; from Mahone's division, Perrin and Harris; and from Wilcox's division, McGowan; these, with Gordon's division, made eight fresh brigades which were soon ready to contest with the Second Corps the conquest of the Salient. By eight o'clock they had forced our wearied and disorganized forces to the outer face of the captured line, around which was waged, until three o'clock the following morning, the fiercest battle of modern times.

The accompanying diagram is a rough sketch of the outline of the Salient and its auxiliary earthworks. They were as well built and as scientifically laid out as any extemporized earthworks I ever saw. They were about five feet high on the inside, faced with logs, and topped with a large log to protect the head, raised so as to leave room enough under the log to handle and aim the muskets. The top of the earthworks outside of the head logs sloped gradually for three feet, and then made a steep descent to the ground.

The outlines of the earthworks on the west front of the Salient were so planned that each separate face (from A to H on the diagram) was enfiladed by the fire from some other part of the line. For this reason the Federal troops were unable to hold possession of the exterior faces of the west front of the Salient, unless they first secured possession of the interior works on that front. For instance, the fronts on G—H and

E—F were enfiladed from B—C. That on C—D from D—E, and so on. In addition to this on the interior fronts of H—I, G—H, F—G, and E—F, they had built strong traverses, extending twelve or fifteen feet perpendicularly, or nearly so, from lines of those faces. These traverses served a double purpose: they prevented us from enfilading those interior faces, and each traverse formed with the front line from which it projected a little fortress, behind which the enemy gathered in groups and poured a deadly fire into our ranks on the westerly front, who were hanging with a deadly grip to the exterior fronts or faces between H and I, and I and K.

In front of the works from A to C, the woods were close to the works. From C to I, they were at different distances, but nowhere more than a thousand feet. The line of earthworks built and occupied by the Sixth Corps extended back of this woods from the point on the Brock Road where Sedgwick was killed, north nearly three quarters of a mile.[1]

G shows the central point of Upton's attack on May 10th, and the lines from F to R indicate the outlines of the interior earthworks captured by Upton, which enabled him to resist the repeated assaults made by the enemy to recapture the lines which he held for nearly three hours.

It is very difficult to determine the exact times when the movements of the different organizations on that day occurred, as well as to trace the movements themselves.

The historian of the Twentieth Massachusetts Regiment says, in the closing sentence above quoted: "By eight o'clock they [the enemy] had forced our wearied

[1] War Maps 55 (2), 96 (3).

and disorganized forces to the outer face of the captured line. . . ."

Returning now to the night of the 11th, General Wright, commanding the Sixth Corps, ordered the Third Division to occupy the entire line of earthworks of the corps, and to release the First and Second Divisions for the support of the Second Corps. At 4.30 o'clock on the morning of the 12th the Second Division took their position northwest of the Brown house in an opening a short distance to the rear of where the assaulting columns of the Second Corps had massed for their attack on the Salient. At the same hour (4.30), the Second Corps began to move forward. At 5 o'clock General Hancock sent the following despatch to General Meade:

SECOND ARMY CORPS,
May 12, 1864—5 A.M.

GENERAL MEADE: Our men have the works, with some hundred prisoners; impossible to say how many; whole line moving up. This part of the line was held by Ewell.

WINF'D S. HANCOCK, *Major-General.*

At 5.55 the following despatch was sent:

HEADQUARTERS SECOND CORPS,
May 12, 1864—5.55 A.M.

[GENERAL MEADE:] It is necessary that General Wright should attack at once. All of my troops are engaged.

WINF'D S. HANCOCK.

and subsequently the following was sent and received:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 12, 1864—6 A.M.

GENERAL HANCOCK: General Wright has been ordered to attack at once vigorously on your right.

S. WILLIAMS,
Assistant Adjutant-General.[1]

[1] See O. R., xxxvi., pt. 2, pp. 656, 657.

According to my recollection, at 6 o'clock of that morning or a little after, Colonel Edwards rushed our brigade, which was in front of the Second Division, through the woods which separated us from the northerly front of the Salient, and we there relieved troops of the Second Corps who occupied a portion of the exterior of the works they had captured from the enemy at dawn. On our left we joined a regiment belonging to the Tammany Brigade of Mott's division of the Second Corps at a point in the line of earthworks one or two hundred feet west of the apex or east angle of the Salient (see K on diagram). The Thirty-seventh occupied on this line, from the point of contact with the Second Corps, to a point within one or two hundred feet of the west or Bloody Angle (I on the diagram). We were joined by the Second Rhode Island on our right at the latter point in the same way. The Tenth Massachusetts joined the right of the Second Rhode Island, and these two regiments extended our line of occupation to a point between G and H as indicated on the diagram. The Seventh Massachusetts of our brigade was on that day detailed to do picket duty, and was not engaged at the Salient. Bidwell's brigade, (Third Brigade, Second Division, Sixth Corps) followed us and was put into the fight on our right, next to the Tenth Massachusetts. The exterior of the earthworks in this part of the line was enfiladed by the enemy's fire so that our troops were unable to occupy the exterior earthworks. In fact, the enemy's works in front of Bidwell's brigade, and where they were occupied by the Tenth Massachusetts and part of the Second Rhode Island, from I to D on the diagram, were the most bitterly contested part of the field.

If our troops could have got possession of the works

at that point, they would have stopped the deadly fire from the traverses, and held the interior fortress from F to R, which enabled Upton, on May 10th, to hold the captured works against the repeated attempts of the Confederate forces to dislodge him. My reasons for stating that Bidwell's brigade was at this early hour (between 6 and 9.30 A.M.) located as I have described, are that Edwards's, Bidwell's, and Wheaton's brigades were at that hour sent to that part of the field. Edwards's occupied the works from K to H, and Wheaton's in front of the works from D to A. It is fair to presume that Bidwell's brigade connected the other two brigades and occupied in front of the works from H to D, as those points are shown on the diagram.

The official reports are consistent with this statement, although those relating to Bidwell's brigade are very meagre. He says:

> On the morning of the 12th we were moved to the rear of the position just captured by General Hancock, and ordered to support a brigade of this division, commanded by Colonel Edwards, at the Angle. The brigade was deployed in line and moved to this point, and two of the regiments, the Forty-ninth and Seventy-seventh New York, charged the Angle and took possession of the crest commanding it, which they held until relieved."[1]

I suppose this is a euphemistic way of describing the failure to hold the works.

General Wheaton, in his report, says:

> May 12, 6 A.M., ordered to the left and south a mile to support the Second Corps, who occupied works captured at daylight. Advanced under a heavy artillery fire to

[1] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 720.

within 50 yards of that part of the works still in the enemy's possession, generally known as the Angle or Slaughter Pen. Here we were exposed to a terrible musketry fire, losing heavily, including many valuable officers.[1]

General Brooke, in his report, same volume, page 411, says that General Wheaton was on the right of the Sixth Corps line (point A on the diagram).

The following despatch from General Hancock to General Meade appears in O. R., xxxvi., pt. 2, page 657:

May 12, 1864—7 A.M.

GENERAL MEADE: General Wright, of Sixth Army Corps, slightly wounded, but still in command.

WINF'D S. HANCOCK,
Major-General.

From the foregoing it appears that at 5.55 A.M. General Hancock was hard pressed, and asked that the Sixth Corps be sent to assist him. At 6 o'clock General Wright was ordered to attack vigorously. His Second Division, which was close at hand, was sent at once into the works. Heavy fighting began along the whole line from the "Apex" of the Salient to the right of the Sixth Corps. The losses in our divisions were heavy. Before 7 o'clock General Wright was listed among the wounded. In a despatch, at 7.15, General Hancock says, "My troops are in great disorder," and in another at 8.50, he says, "The enemy have been attacking us with great vehemence," and at 7.30 Meade sends word to Warren, "Wright says his right is attacked strongly and wants support . . . you must also support him."[2]

[1] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 684.
[2] See O. R., xxxvi., pt. 2, pp. 657, 658, 662.

It was a foggy, misty morning, with rain at intervals, and I remember that at least three successive columns of the enemy before nine o'clock emerged from the mist, but at close range under our musketry fire were dissolved and swept away. I refer to these proofs now to show that during the three hours and a half between 6 and 9.30, when three brigades of the Second Division of the Sixth Corps were alone on the front of that part of the Salient, where the battle of the "Bloody Angle" was chiefly fought, most desperate fighting was then in progress. You will notice that I say "three brigades of the Second Division." This calls for explanation. This division at that time was composed of four brigades, and the one thus far not accounted for, was the most famous of all its brigades; probably as famous as any brigade in the army. I refer to the Second, commonly known as the Vermont Brigade of the Second Division, Sixth Corps. It was very conspicuous in the fighting of that day; but in the early morning it reported to General Hancock, and was by him "ordered to the extreme left of the Second Corps (which was the extreme left of the Army of the Potomac)," where the brigade formed in two lines, threw out skirmishers and fortified.[1] (See M in the diagram.)

Let us now see what had happened within the enemy's lines during these early morning hours. Under the impression that the attack was to be renewed upon his left flank, General Lee, on the afternoon of the 11th, withdrew his artillery from the Salient, and sent it to his left. During the night General Johnson heard from his picket line in front of the Salient that sounds of activity, indicating possibility of an attack on the

[1] Report of General L. A. Grant, O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, page 703.

Salient, were in the air, and communicated the report to headquarters; whereupon General Lee ordered the immediate return of his artillery, and the batteries came galloping up just as the Second Corps columns of attack sprang into the works and compelled the surrender of Johnson and his defending forces, including his artillery. After securing their prisoners and sending them to the rear, the Second Corps surged forward to the earthworks,—marked S—T on the diagram. At this time they were in the disorganized and confused condition described in the foregoing quotation. General Gordon's division was behind the earthwork. In the then condition of the Second Corps, it was an armed mob attacking a fortified line, defended by the best troops in the Southern army. The result was, our forces were driven back in rout, but rallied on the reverse side of the earthworks.

General Gordon, in his *Reminiscences of the Civil War*, after describing in rather exaggerated phrase his gathering of forces to meet Hancock's advancing host; General Lee's inspiring presence and determination to personally lead them, overcome by the appeals and assurances of his officers and men that if he would go to the rear they would drive back the invaders; the resistless rush under cover of the fog of his organized lines upon the disorganized Second Corps;—closes the paragraph with this remark (page 280), "Every foot of the lost Salient and earthworks was retaken, except that small stretch which the Confederate line was too short to cover." Later on he continues (at page 284):

As soon as it was ascertained that the Confederate lines had been too short to stretch across the whole of the wide-spreading crescent, and that the outer slope of a portion of

Lee's works was still held by Grant's stalwart fighters, the third and last act of that memorable performance was opened. Under my orders, and under cover of the intrenchment, my men began to slip to the left a few feet at a time, in order to occupy, unobserved if possible, that still open space. The ditch along which they slowly glided, and from which the earth had been thrown to form the embankment, favored them; but immediately opposite to them and within a few feet of them on the outer side stood their keen-eyed, alert foemen, holding to their positions with a relentless grip. This noiseless sliding process had not proceeded far before it was discovered by the watchful men in blue. The discovery was made at the moment when Lee and Grant began to hurl their columns against that portion of the works held by both. Thus was inaugurated that roll of musketry which is likely to remain without a parallel, at least in the length of time it lasted.

Mounting to the crest of the embankment, the Union men poured upon the Confederates a galling fire. To the support of the latter other Confederate commands quickly came, crowding into the ditches, clambering up the embankment's side, and returning volley for volley. Then followed the mighty rush from both armies, filling the entire disputed space. Firing into one another's faces, beating one another down with clubbed muskets, the front ranks fought across the embankment's crest almost within an arm's reach, the men behind passing up to them freshly loaded rifles as their own were emptied. As those in front fell, others quickly sprang forward to take their places. On both sides the dead men were piled in heaps. As Confederates fell, their bodies rolled into the ditch, and upon their bleeding forms, their living comrades stood, beating back Grant's furiously charging columns. The bullets seemed to fly in sheets. Before the pelting hail and withering blast the standing timber fell. The breastworks were literally drenched in blood. The coming of the darkness failed to check the raging battle. It only served to increase the awful terror of the scene.

In an address by Colonel Joseph N. Brown,[1] who, after the wounding of General McGowan at the Bloody Angle, on May 12th, had command of what was known as McGowan's (South Carolina) brigade, and which brigade for nineteen hours, from 9 in the morning of the 12th until 4 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, occupied the traverses at the Bloody Angle, and with Harris's Mississippi Brigade did some of the most desperate fighting at the Bloody Angle, it is stated:

On the morning of the 12th of May, the brigade was in front or north of Spottsylvania court-house. Gen. Ewell's corps was on the left or west of us. It was scarcely light when we heard firing along Gen. Ewell's lines and the direction soon indicated that his troops were being driven back. A feeling of unrest among officers of high rank indicated disaster. Gen. Harris's Mississippi Brigade of A. P. Hill's corps was ordered to move in that direction. Soon after 9 o'clock McGowan's brigade was also ordered there. Gen. Grant had massed his troops and assaulted the lines held by Gen. Ewell, capturing Gen. Edward Johnson and over 3000 prisoners. It was to recapture these works and repair the disaster that Harris's and McGowan's brigades were sent forward. Gen. John B. Gordon by a brilliant charge and some other commands of Gen. Ewell's corps had already recaptured part of the works. But the strongest and most ably defended portion including the Angle and the works to the left of it, was still held by the Federal troops. Gen. Harris's brigade had captured part of the line to the right of Gen. Gordon, but did not reach to the Angle. This left the Angle and the works to the right of Gen. Harris for the assault and capture by McGowan's brigade.

[1] Pamphlet printed by The Advocate Publishing Co. (1900), Anderson, S. C., "An Address delivered by Col. Joseph N. Brown, at the November (1900) meeting of the R. E. Lee Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy on the Battle of the 'Bloody Angle.'"

It was here that the celebrated incident of Gen. Gordon inducing Gen. Lee to go to the rear occurred. The Angle was not an inverted V nor a horse-shoe as sometimes called in the reports, and in fact was an obtuse instead of an acute angle in the works. These works were on the highest ground or crest at this place, sloping down-hill in front and rear and were in the edge of oak woods on our side and an old field of pines in our front, rather thin nearest the works and thicker farther into the Federal lines in our front. This depression was such a formation as afforded protection to the Federals. From the Angle westward to be occupied by us were traverses or short breastworks some twelve or fifteen feet long running back or south from the front and about the same distance apart and open to the rear. These traverses had been constructed for defence from an enfilading or flank fire to which the troops might be subjected from the enemy on the right of the Angle in case they held it. [A diagram exhibited, the blue lines representing the Federal forces, the black lines the Confederates.]

The brigade on reaching the battle ground was rapidly formed in line of battle, the Twelfth on the right, which would be for the Angle, and the Fourteenth on the left, farthest from the Angle, and the other regiments between. Through some fault of some officers of Gen. Ewell or Gen. Rodes we were not properly directed so as to reach the objective point, and the right of the brigade, the Twelfth Regiment, did not reach as far as the Angle and the other regiments toward the left had to go through the terrible ordeal of a flank movement led by the Twelfth, and it was one of the fiercest and most bloody struggles of the war, but succeeded in reaching and holding the Angle while the Federal troops still held the right of the Angle on the opposite side almost lapping our lines. Thus both sides claimed to hold the Angle. Besides the heavy loss of men there was a greater proportion in loss of officers for the number engaged. We had lost so heavily in officers in the Wilderness that we had perhaps not half our usual number and of

these very few escaped being killed or wounded. The charge was made facing a terrific fire in front and a more terrific and deadly fire in flank from the enemy on the right of the Angle. It is only the soldier familiar with battle that knows the fatal effect of a flank fire. But it was met and the works carried, but with it the severe wounding of Gen. McGowan, our brigade commander. Col. B. T. Brockman, the second in command, was mortally wounded; Cols. McCreary of the First and Miller of Orr's Rifles wounded; Lieut.-Col. W. P. Shooter of the First killed, and many line officers wounded, and Adjutant D. E. Brown of the Fourteenth mortally wounded. In the wounding of Gen. McGowan and Col. Brockman, the command of the brigade devolved on me as third in command, being next in rank to Col. Brockman, but my regiment, the Fourteenth, being on the left, and Lieut.-Col. Isaac F. Hunt of the Thirteenth Regiment being near the Angle to the right, he conducted the battle for awhile with the right regiments, being the ranking officer on that part of the line. He soon informed me of the state of affairs and I assumed command, going with him to the right, near the Angle, and at once took in the situation and entered upon the work of holding the Angle during the next succeeding seventeen hours under the most terrific rain of minie balls recorded in the history of warfare. During that seventeen hours the oak woods along our line and to our rear were riddled with bullets; one red oak, near 18 inches in diameter, and a hickory, 8 inches, were cut down by the minie balls in our lines, in the fourth traverse from the Angle, and many others stripped largely of the bark and leaves. The hickory fell late in the afternoon and the oak early in the night.

On arriving at this point and assuming command it became apparent from the few officers left with us, that in order to successfully hold the Angle another officer was needed to forward men to the right to take the places of their comrades as they fell killed or wounded, and to forward ammunition to replenish the cartridge boxes, while the

brigade commander should take his station near the right and be ready for emergencies as they might arise. At my request Col. Hunt took charge of the forwarding of the men and ammunition as needed, and with almost superhuman strength performed that duty during the long, deadly struggle. Without this efficient service it would seem impossible to have held the lines. Any weakening of the lines, or any scarcity of ammunition would have been fatal. The brave men towards our left moved with haste to the right as called upon, and never for a moment did we lack for men to hold the Angle and traverses to its left, though frequently the enemy crossed rifles and bayonets across the works and at times crossed over themselves, when a hand-to-hand conflict ensued most deadly in its character. Our men in the traverses to the left would charge in with the Rebel yell to the aid of their overpowered comrades, recapture the position with some prisoners, and drive the others across to their own side. Except when the conflict was raging at such close quarters, the whole fire of the Federals was concentrated from all points and their lines were also heavily concentrated, and quadrupled, upon our front and that of Harris, but more than doubly so on the Angle and traverses in our brigade, heavier at the oak tree on the fourth traverse above described. Late in the day it was observed that quite a number of Harris's brigade were being brought to the right with our men by Col. Hunt, and the number increased later, so that by night every part of our brigade, and especially on the right, was intermingled with the brave Mississippians.

With one short intermission hereinafter referred to, the conflict raged every hour and every minute until midnight with the greatest fury, and from midnight until 4 A.M. on the 13th it only slackened from the exhaustion and weakness of our brave soldiers and by the withdrawal of part of the Union forces in our front. I say part of them, for by Gen. Hancock's official report he states that he withdrew his forces at midnight, but my personal knowledge of the

sweeping bullets along our lines all the night long, impels me to construe his report as withdrawing his corps but leaving other commands to contest the point until morning. At all events soldiers were there and firing continually, closely, and at short range. And to the last our men fell pierced by their bullets. The Mississippians like us had very few officers and in many of the traverses had not an officer with them, nor did they seem to need them for all along the lines they had special orders to move rapidly to any point of greatest danger. This they did every time the enemy secured any footing on the right and drove them out, recovering the lost ground. The lines on the left of the brigade of course became thinner in order to mass on the right and to fill the places of our dead and wounded, and so did the lines of Harris's brigade, for by night we had a large body of them with us on the right. They responded nobly to Col. Hunt's demand on them, for he did not deem it prudent to make the lines of our brigade any weaker. He went still farther to the west into Gen. S. D. Ramseur's brigade, but under orders his officers could not weaken their line. No immediate firing was in their front, but a cross fire from the right of the Angle threw some balls among them to which they could not reply in safety to us. It was a rainy day and water stood in the trenches, reddened with the blood of our wounded and dead comrades, and before dark the dead were so thick in the traverses toward the right that the living had not standing room without trampling on them and they laid them in heaps to make room. Night came on and our men still held every foot of ground which had been captured. The Angle was still ours, and no attempt to cross it was again made. But the deadly fire continued from front and flank, and scores of men fell during the night whose names could not be known and on the roll-call next day were added to the list of missing. It was in the dark of the moon and a drizzling rain fell all night, and the darkness was only broken by the flashing of the guns to light up the horrid scene. After midnight the fire of the enemy slackened but

continued dangerous and fatal all night and ceased only as we involuntarily left the place at 4 A.M. on the 13th. We quietly left with only a few stray bullets following. We withdrew because a better and stronger line had been formed in our rear, as being better than sending in reinforcements.

At 9.30 o'clock on the morning of the 12th, the enemy had succeeded in taking possession of the interior lines of the works on the west side of the Salient from the point designated as A in the diagram, to a point about 150 feet southwest of the so-called Bloody Angle, designated as I on the diagram, and from that point the Fourth Brigade of the Second Division occupied the exterior line of the earthworks of the Salient to a point within 150 feet of the apex of the Salient, where for a distance of several hundred feet, the enemy had succeeded in dislodging a portion of Mott's division of the Second Corps, and driving them out of their possession of the works. Later in the day this portion of the line was recaptured by the Second Corps.

Until the arrival of the First Division of the Sixth Corps, about 9.30 o'clock, the Fourth Brigade was mainly employed with the other brigades of the Second Division in replying to the almost constant fusillade kept up by the enemy from behind the impenetrable fog in which they were concealed, and repelling three separate assaults of their columns of attack, by which they attempted to compel the Sixth Corps to withdraw entirely from its possession of the works connected with the Salient. For an hour or two after 9.30, the Fourth Brigade was alone in its occupancy of the exterior of the works on that portion of the line, and on both flanks of the brigade, where we occupied the exterior of the works, the enemy occupied the interior at a distance of only four or five feet between the lines.

A little beyond the right of the line occupied by us the enemy had built, in order to prevent the enfilading of their lines by our artillery, a series of traverses which extended perpendicularly from the interior of the earthworks twelve or fifteen feet, at distances of fifteen or twenty feet apart. The whole number of these traverses, so far as they were visible from our line, did not exceed ten. These were occupied by the enemy and used as fortresses, from which they kept up a constant fire upon all of our lines within their vision. On the other hand, a great part of our time was occupied in watching for the appearance of heads above or outside of these fortresses or under the head logs, in order to get shots at their marksmen and silence their fire. As the fog was much of the time so heavy that nothing could be seen but the dim outlines of the works, we kept up a constant fire in order to prevent them from showing themselves, or using the openings under the head logs as port-holes. They used the same tactics in trying to silence our fire.

Thus it continued from 6 o'clock on the morning of the 12th until 4 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, the soldiers of the Fourth Brigade firing during that time about 500 rounds of ammunition to the man. They brought us ammunition by the box. Our guns got hot and we would send them to the rear and receive other guns in exchange, and when our guns were cooled and cleaned they were returned to us. The operation was repeated several times during the day. They did not dare to relieve us because they were afraid that when we were moving out and other regiments were coming in, the enemy would seize the interior of the lines and accomplish the end they had been fighting for. At one time after dark, about 9 o'clock in the evening,

an attempt was made to withdraw our line and to substitute another brigade for ours, but in the midst of it the cry was raised that the enemy were occupying the works and we were speedily rushed back into our former position and the attempt to relieve us was given up.

On several occasions during the day undertakings were organized with a view of storming the traverses and getting possession of the interior works. In the morning, between 10 and 11 o'clock, Colonel Edwards was authorized to organize a detail of fifty men who were expected to carry the first traverses at the point of the bayonet. Accordingly he called for volunteers from the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, and fifty men stepped forward, and I was assigned to the duty of leading them. We withdrew from the works to a protected point just under the crest in the rear of the line and made our plans. I examined, as carefully as I could, from the different standpoints the traverses that were to be assaulted, and agreed with Colonel Edwards as to the line of our attack. When we were all ready to start, orders were received from the headquarters of the corps countermanding the authority to make the attempt. I have the impression that the results of the various assaults attempted by General Upton and General Russell, and in particular by the New Jersey Brigade, had convinced the officers at the headquarters of the corps that it would be a useless slaughter.

If the New Jersey Brigade failed to hold this portion of the works after getting inside of them on the 10th, and were compelled to retire with the loss of 789 men, what could our little handful of fifty men hope to accomplish in their effort to seize and hold the same position? If we had made the attempt there is every

probability that the whole detachment would have been sacrificed.

Later in the day Cutler's division of the Fifth Corps was ordered to make an assault on the same part of the enemy's lines, backed if necessary by the other divisions of the Fifth Corps.

General Humphrey in his *Virginia Campaign of '64 and '65*,[1] says of this assault:

> It appearing probable that the enemy's intrenchments in the vicinity of the west angle could be carried if assaulted by the whole Fifth Corps, General Warren was directed to withdraw from his front and move with his whole corps to the designated point and attack. Griffin's division followed Cutler's closely. The other troops of the Fifth Corps were following except Crawford's division, when the project of further assault was given up, as it did not appear to promise a complete success.

The Fourth Brigade did succeed in stopping any advance of the enemy north of the first traverse in the interior of their works. Our guns were trained on that point with instructions to shoot down and annihilate every live thing that appeared on that part of the field. The result was that nothing could live there. Hundreds of muskets were trained ready to shoot if any attempt was made to advance their occupation at that point, and after dark when we could no longer see any such movement a constant fire was kept up to prevent any possible attempt on their part to seize and occupy the Angle. Several such attempts were made during the day, but they had to be abandoned.

General Humphrey further says at page 98:

> It is apparent from these statements that the outer face

[1] "Campaigns of the War Series" (Scribner), vol. xii., p. 101.

of the captured intrenchments in this part of the field was held by our troops, as they were from there around to the apex of the west angle and *some distance on the west face of the Salient.*

Thus hour after hour we kept up our weary vigil. Every other regiment or brigade of the Sixth Corps that was on the firing line was relieved during the afternoon or early evening. In volume iv. of the Papers of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, on the Wilderness Campaign, at page 66, it is stated in the note that all Grant's toilers in the ditch were relieved except the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts. My understanding is that none of the regiments of the Fourth Brigade, Second Division, was relieved, but of this I am not absolutely certain. Possibly the Tenth Massachusetts and Second Rhode Island were withdrawn from the firing line at 9 o'clock in the evening, when the attempt was made to relieve the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, which failed, as I have before described.[1]

[1] General Edwards, of the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts regiment, in his unpublished memoir entitled, "My Recollections of the Civil War" (manuscript, pages 85–7), concludes his account of the battle as follows: "My command was engaged in close, hot fighting from about 5 A.M., May 12th, to 3 A.M., May 13th (22 hours). This shows that my front was the main point of attack. The heavy traverses, and enfilading fire, also showed my front to have been the crown or apex of the Angle. The line of the enemy's enfilading fire across Upton's front, and down the line of the Tenth Massachusetts to the Second Company to the right of the Second Rhode Island passed then to the rear of the Second Rhode Island and Thirty-seventh Massachusetts until opposite the left of the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts the enfilading fire was about 50 yards in their rear. These facts certainly prove the location of the Angle. As the battle of the Angle (after Hancock's magnificent charge) was no part of the plans of General Grant, it was not considered of much importance by us, but the Richmond *Whig* of May 18th, 1864, showed that the enemy considered it of very great importance, and that the defence

Between three and four o'clock in the morning of May 13th, the enemy withdrew their forces from the Salient to the earthworks which they had built during the previous day at its base. We waited for the dawn and then cautiously peered over the earthworks. They had so quietly stolen away that we were not aware that they had gone, and expected to see them rise from behind their traverses and renew the fight, but it did not take us long to discover the fact that they had vacated the Salient.

Such a scene as we there witnessed is beyond the power of pen to describe. The bodies of the fallen lay all over the field. Horses and men chopped into hash by the bullets, and appearing more like piles of jelly than the distinguishable forms of human life, were scattered all over the plain. Caissons and artillery carriages were cut into slivers. Trees large and small were cut down. It had rained much of the twenty-

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was the most heroic they had ever met on the part of the Yanks. The survivors of the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts and the Second Rhode Island, Tenth Massachusetts, and the regiments of the brigade of the Second Corps, will recognize the truth of what I have written of the battle of the Angle. I refrain from mentioning names of those of my command who were especially brave and efficient as nearly all of the command did such heroic fighting. In giving this version of the Angle proper, I have carefully reviewed all the data in my possession, and while I recognize how nearly impossible it is to give an entirely correct account of any battle, yet I am confident that what I have written herein is as correct as it is possible to be, so far as it concerns my own command and those commands immediately on my right, and left. And this I write as the honor of the defence of the Angle has been claimed for Upton's brigade, which might as well have been at the bottom of a well firing up at the sky for all the loss they did or could inflict upon the enemy, from the position they occupied. Throughout that long night Captain T. G. Colt was the only one of my staff able to do duty. His great heart and intense will kept him up while the other brave men slept like the dead in the mud and rain. There was no artillery used on our side at or near the Angle save a section (two guns) on the front of the Second

four hours, and the surface of the plain was torn with the trampling of the armed hosts and the struggles of the combatants. The ground was soaked with blood and water, with here and there pools deeply dyed with the same ingredients.

Among the wounded were Lieutenant-Colonel Montague, Captains Lincoln and Pease, First Lieutenants Champney and Wellman, Second Lieutenants Sparks, Follansbee, and Cooke. The latter was of my company, and in his case and that of Follansbee the wounds proved fatal. Both were recently promoted and commissioned and had excellent records as soldiers. George Cooke was my acquaintance from boyhood, and our relations in the regiment were very intimate. Toward Lincoln I felt like a brother, and as rumor at first reported him as mortally wounded, I had a deep sense of depression as if I were being deserted and left alone. My weariness added much to the force of this impression.

Rhode Island. As the fire of these guns was less effective than the infantry fire owing to the enemy's being entirely protected from our fire until they were within a few yards from us, I requested the officer commanding them to withdraw the guns which he did, the guns being in action but a short time. Two oak trees of considerable size were cut down by bullets in front of my command and a battle flag was captured by the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts. The Vermont Brigade to the right of Wheaton had some hard fighting and drove the enemy from their front and Birney's division to my left repulsed any attempt made by the enemy in their front, but the Angle proper was defended by my command of the Thirty-seventh and Tenth Massachusetts and Second Rhode Island of my own brigade, and what I understand to have been the Excelsior Brigade of the Second Corps, assisted by the effective cross fire of the Tenth New Jersey (after 5 P.M.). The longest and severest fighting was sustained by the Thirty-seventh and Tenth Massachusetts and the Second Rhode Island. My account of the defence of the Angle is mainly limited to the defence of the Angle proper; of the honorable part borne by other commands I could attempt to write only what I saw myself or heard of at the time."

Returning now to the First Division of the Sixth Corps, Upton's official report indicates that, in the early morning, that division was sent to or towards the right of the Army of the Potomac. General Upton there states: "Early on the 12th it [Upton's Second Brigade, First Division] *moved with the division* toward the right flank of the army, but to the left again at 7 A.M., arriving in rear of the Second Corps at 9.30 A.M." (O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, page 669). In Haines's *History of the Fifteenth New Jersey Regiment*, which regiment belonged to the First (or New Jersey) Brigade and First Division of the Sixth Corps, the following facts appear. General Sedgwick on May 9th, just before he was killed, ordered the First New Jersey Brigade from an exposed position on the Brock Road to a place in the rear near Alsop's house on the same road. On page 174 Haines says:

> We had been drawn in, during the night of the 10th, from the position before the Salient, to one behind a work which had been constructed to the left and rear of the position of the morning of the 9th and *to which we had been ordered by General Sedgwick* just before he fell. *On the 11th after the manœuvers in front of this position, we were brought back to this point, where we again spent the night.*

This fixes the position of the New Jersey Brigade and probably of the First Division on the night of the 11th of May, to-wit: at Alsop's, which was one mile west of the Salient. Mr. Haines continues:

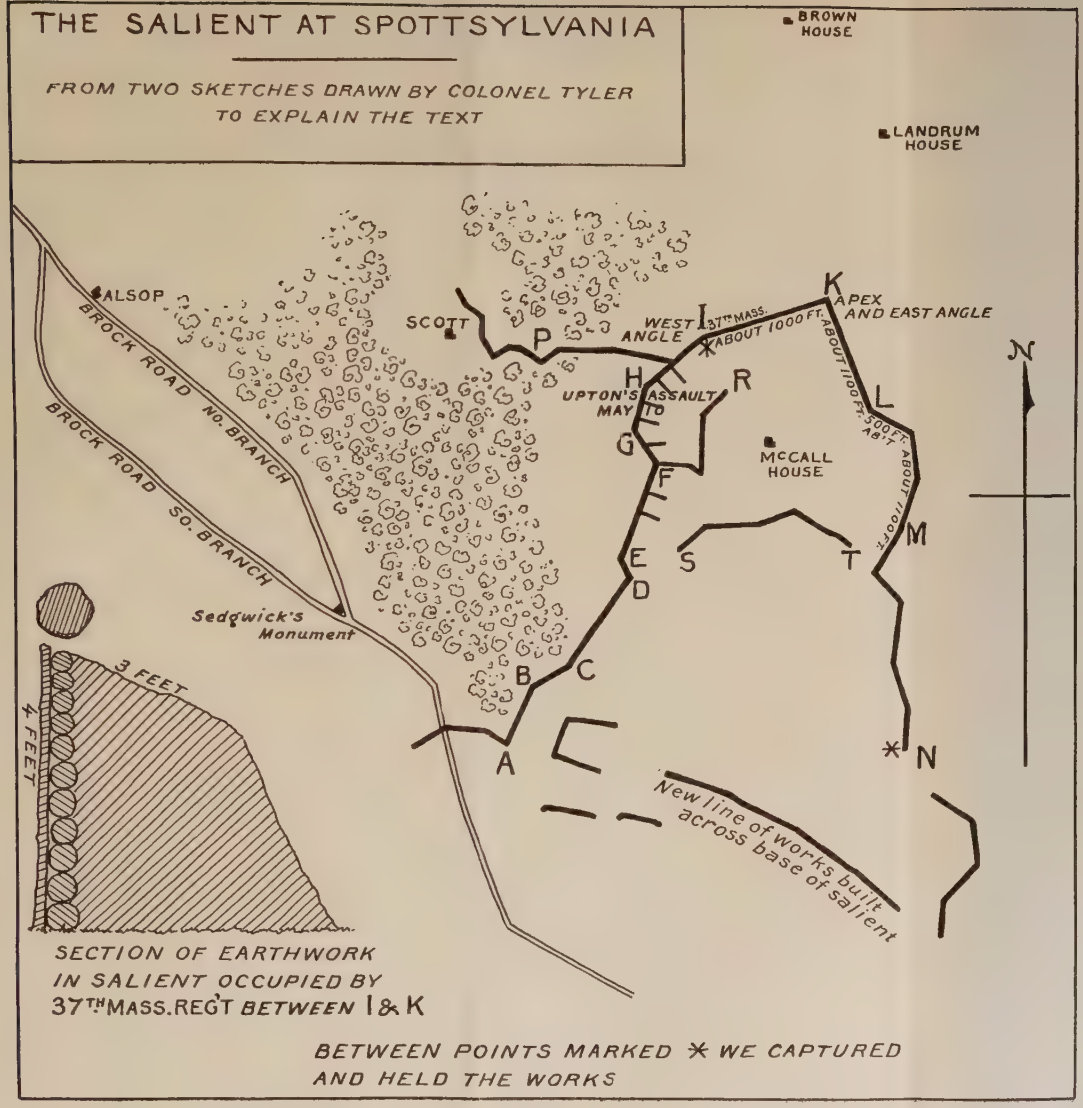
> When the works at the Salient were taken, we were at once hurried *still further to the right* [N. B. the exact movement described by General Upton as made at the time *by*

his brigade with the division] south of the position of the morning of the 9th, *with the view of strengthening the right flank of our army, in case an attack should be made upon it by the enemy, who might naturally suppose we had weakened our line there by the forces taken to the left.* [After stating the success of the Second Corps attack:] The brigade was then double-quicked to the north, to the camp of the night before, from which we had started; then east, . . . and southward to the Bloody Angle."

General Upton states the fact of this digressive movement and Haines's History gives the details and the reasons for the same. The result was that the First Division did not reach the battle-ground until 9.30 A.M., and the Second Division had then been desperately fighting with varying fortunes for three and a half hours.

Under General Russell's direction, the First (or New Jersey) Brigade was put into position opposite the point where Upton made his successful assault on May 10th, the Second (or Upton's) Brigade supported by the Third (or Russell's old) Brigade established the left of its line about two hundred feet south of the west (or "Bloody") angle, in the exterior of the earthworks, extending a little north of west (see O—P on diagram), and the Fourth (or Shaler's) Brigade was put in at various points to fill gaps as they were found to exist in the line, and in particular relieved a portion of Mott's division, Second Corps, at the east angle.

The part taken by each of the commands will more fully appear when the story of each is told. Of course, it is imperfect, but I give it so far as I have been able to gather it from the official records and regimental and brigade histories. Parts of some of these reports have already been quoted, but at the risk of repetition


THE SALIENT AT SPOTTSYLVANIA
FROM TWO SKETCHES DRAWN BY COLONEL TYLER TO EXPLAIN THE TEXT
BROWN HOUSE
LANDRUM HOUSE
ALSOP
BROCK ROAD No. BRANCH
BROCK ROAD SO. BRANCH
SCOTT
Sedgwick's Monument
WEST ANGLE
37TH MASS.
ABOUT 1000 FT.
APEX AND EAST ANGLE
ABOUT 1100 FT.
300 FT. ABT
ABOUT 1100 FT.
UPTON'S ASSAULT MAY 10
McCALL HOUSE
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
K
L
M
N
P
R
S
T
3 FEET
4 FEET
New line of works built across base of salient
SECTION OF EARTHWORK IN SALIENT OCCUPIED BY 37TH MASS. REG'T BETWEEN I & K
BETWEEN POINTS MARKED * WE CAPTURED AND HELD THE WORKS

whatever relates to these specific commands will be given in full under headings naming the commands to which they relate.[1]

[1] The story here referred to of the part taken and the positions occupied by each brigade of the Sixth Corps, separately told, will be found in the Appendix, at page 349.

CHAPTER XI

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BATTLES OF THE WILDERNESS AND SPOTTSYLVANIA

THE Wilderness and Spottsylvania were in reality one long drawn battle. Grant started out to administer a decisive defeat to the Army of Northern Virginia. Lee countered, as he had done, so successfully at Chancellorsville, when the Army of the Potomac attempted to advance against him in Virginia, by checking the advance in its beginnings, and then striking a quick, decisive blow in return. He succeeded remarkably at Chancellorsville with these tactics and in the Wilderness he tried it with the assurance of success that he had derived from his experience at Chancellorsville.

His biographers are unanimous in declaring that Lee fully believed that he had Grant in a trap, and would be able to overwhelm him or drive him back as he had Hooker and Burnside. In fact against any other commander of the Army of the Potomac than Grant, after the 6th of May the movement would have ended in a retreat across the Rappahannock. Lee himself was much astonished on the 7th of May when he found that Grant was moving around his right flank and advancing instead of retreating. This was a bitter disappointment to Lee, and at Spottsylvania he summoned all the resources of his great nature in one final supreme effort

to stop Grant's advance, and to compel the retreat of the Northern army. This accounts for the terrible conflict that was waged at Spottsylvania. It was the last desperate effort of the Army of Northern Virginia aggressively to check our advance by the right flank and if possible cut us off from our base at Fredericksburg.

After Spottsylvania, Lee fought a defensive fight, although at North Anna, where he was prostrated by sickness, he is quoted by one of his staff as saying, "We must strike them a blow, we must never let them pass us again." The will was still there, but both he and his army were too weak to put it into execution. They were saving their strength for the defensive tactics adopted at Cold Harbor.

It is reported that as Lee rode away from Spottsylvania, he remarked, "We wish no more Salients."

That the pace which General Lee established for the Army of Northern Virginia in the Wilderness and maintained at Spottsylvania was too hot to be kept up, was indicated by what had happened to its leaders. By the time that he reached North Anna, not only was Lee himself prostrated by an alarming sickness, but his great cavalry commander Stuart was killed on the 10th of May, at the Yellow Tavern, a few miles north of Richmond.[1] Two out of three of his corps commanders were disabled, Longstreet by wounds, and A. P. Hill by sickness. These men could not be replaced.

Swinton, in his *History of the Army of the Potomac*, at page 458, sums up the situation of the Northern army in the following language:

> Before the lines of Spottsylvania the Army of the

[1] See Long's *Memoirs of R. E. Lee*, page 343.

Potomac had for twelve days and nights engaged in a fierce wrestle, in which it had done all that valor may do to carry a position, by nature and art impregnable.

In this contest, unparalleled in its continuous fury, and swelling to the proportions of a campaign, language is inadequate to convey an impression of the labors, fatigues, and sufferings of the troops, who fought by day only to march by night, from point to point of the long line, and renew the fight on the morrow. Above forty thousand men had already fallen in the bloody encounters of the Wilderness and Spottsylvania, and the exhausted army began to lose its spirit. It was with joy, therefore, that it at length turned its back upon the lines of Spottsylvania.

The Southern losses were proportionately less than the Northern, but the resources of the North were vastly greater than those of the South.

Who can doubt that General Lee, as he turned his back upon the lines of his army at Spottsylvania and thought of his dwindling numbers and his irreparable losses, recognized the fact that the era of great battles between the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac had passed? Henceforth he was on the defensive.

CHAPTER XII

AFTER SPOTTSYLVANIA. NORTH ANNA AND COLD HARBOR

MAY 13 TO JUNE 12, 1864

WHEN the Fourth Brigade, Second Division, were relieved at the Bloody Angle, at 5 o'clock of the morning of May 13th, and allowed to go to the rear, they were so exhausted, that when they were withdrawn to the vicinity of the Landrum house, they could hardly wait for their breakfast of crackers and coffee, until they dropped in their tracks and fell asleep in the soft spongy Virginia soil. They slept without interruption during that day and until evening, when the Sixth Corps was ordered to follow the Fifth Corps in a movement through the woods in the rear of Burnside (Ninth Corps) to the extreme left of the line southeast from Spottsylvania Court-House.

The night was horribly dark, and at times the rain fell in torrents. An attempt had been made to mark the route by building fires at intervals through the woods, and guides supposed to be familiar with the byways and paths of that region were used; but the fires gradually burned out, the guides even got lost, and before daylight we were obliged to halt because of inability to make any progress. With the dawn of day we were started again and moved two or three miles to the left, through the mud, where we rested from 9 o'clock in the morning until 3 o'clock in the afternoon

of May 14th. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon we were moved still farther to the left, halted and formed lines of battle with the Third Division of the Sixth Corps thrown across the Po River. After moving our lines three separate times, we were finally allowed to spend the night in a ploughed field, sleeping as we could between the furrows with our arms in our hands.

May 15th was Sunday, and after being awakened at 5 o'clock in the morning and standing in line for an hour, the regiments were allowed to stack arms and to eventually spend the day and the night in attempted rest with one or two interruptions in the shape of orders to move, which were countermanded. Our chaplain even held service at 1 o'clock and preached a sermon.

The weather was threatening and all night the rain fell in heavy showers. This was the beginning of a period of five days of rain, during which General Grant writes that the "roads became so bad that ambulances with wounded men could not move between the Army and Fredericksburg."

On the night of the 17th, the Second and Sixth Corps were suddenly ordered to march back to their old positions at the Salient and to assault at 4 A.M. of the next morning. We marched all night, a step at a time, and in the morning found ourselves near the famous Angle of May 12th.

General Wheaton's brigade was massed for an assault, and we were part of the supports. The attack was made at 4.30 in the morning, but we did not succeed in surprising the enemy, and their works were too strong to be carried by assault. After being subjected to a severe fire of shell, grape, and canister, the Sixth Corps was withdrawn, the Thirty-seventh having suffered a loss of twenty-one men.

During the afternoon of the 18th we returned to our position on the left of the army from which we had started the previous day. That night I was detailed with 100 men to perform picket duty. Our picket line ran through heavily timbered woods. I had great difficulty in establishing the line and making connections at both ends. The forest was so thick and dark that I saw it would be impossible to relieve the line at night. I therefore put three men on each post with instructions that they should relieve each other, and I planted these posts at proper intervals. But as the Confederate picket line was so close in our front that we could hear them moving about and talking, we spent a very anxious night. We were withdrawn at daylight and returned to the regiment, and the corps was moved about a mile to the right and formed line of battle in anticipation of an attack. The day passed without any special occurrence in our front or on our part of the line. General Grant was occupied during this and the next two days with preparations to move the army around the Confederate right flank, which resulted in bringing the two armies face to face on the south bank of the North Anna River on May 24th.

During May 20th I received the following order:

HEADQUARTERS SECOND DIV., 6TH CORPS,
May 19th, 1864.

Special Orders.
No. 81. [Extract]

Captain M. W. Tyler, 37th Massachusetts Volunteers, is hereby detailed as A. A. D. C. to Brig.-Gen. Neill, Com'd'g 2d Division. He will report with the least possible delay.

By order of
Brig.-Gen. NEILL.
(Signed), WILLIAM H. LONG,
Capt. & A. A. G.

I received the order on the 20th, and reported on the 21st to General Neill at 12 o'clock.

General Thomas H. Neill, who had honored me with an appointment on his staff, was a graduate of West Point in the Class of 1847, had served in the Mexican War and in the Indian campaigns on the frontier. He was brevetted for conspicuous gallantry at Malvern Hill, received four other brevets during the war, and at its close was a brevet major-general of volunteers. When General Getty was wounded on May 6th in the Wilderness, General Neill was assigned to the command of the Second Division, Sixth Corps. He was a man of fine personal presence, very cultivated in his tastes and manners, and in the regular army was generally known as "Beau Neill." It was a rare privilege for me to serve on the staff of such an experienced and capable division commander. My associates on the staff were Captain William H. Long, assistant adjutant-general, Captain Hazard Stevens, division inspector-general, and Captains Horace Binney and Andrew J. Smith, personal aides-de-camp. It was an efficient staff. Excepting myself they were all experienced and seasoned staff officers.

When I reported for duty I was pretty well fagged out. We had fought by day and marched by night until it seemed as if I could hardly put one foot before the other. It was a great relief to mount a horse, although I was so tired that during the first two or three nights it seemed as if I would fall asleep and roll off my horse in spite of myself.

At 3 o'clock on the morning of May 21st, we were ordered out to stand in line. The details for picket and fatigue duty were so large that there were hardly men enough left to man the works. At 9 o'clock we moved

back into a new line of works where my regiment spent the rest of the day. During the afternoon the Sixth Corps, which had been selected to cover the final withdrawal of the army from the Spottsylvania lines, was ordered to be in readiness for a move at dark. We were concentrated on high ground, in the vicinity of the Gayle house[1] on the Fredericksburg road. Late in the day, General Hill made a reconnoissance in force to see if we were still in the lines, but was driven back in confusion. The artillery firing was especially effective under the direction of Colonel C. H. Tompkins. The Sixth Corps suffered a loss of a few men, and of these the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts contributed one man killed, and six wounded. I was busy during the engagement carrying orders.

After dark we started and marched slowly, and all the next day, halting briefly for meals. Our route was by Guinea Station,[2] where Stonewall Jackson died,[3] and from thence along the railroad to Milford Point Station. The distance marched was something over twenty miles. We halted at 6.30 P.M., at Calker's Station, very much fatigued, but formed line of battle and spent the night in that array.

The next morning, May 23d, at 5 o'clock we were awake, and I was sent with an engineer officer to find the "Telegraph Road," and see if there were any traces of the Confederate army. I succeeded in finding the road, but no Confederates were in sight, and I reported accordingly, and upon my return had breakfast. For some reason, to me unknown, our march was not resumed until ten o'clock, when we crossed the Ta

[1] See War Map 91 (1) about two miles N. E. of the court-house.
[2] See War Map 81 (2).
[3] See *Life and Letters*, by his wife, p. 453.

River, halted and distributed rations, and then crossed the Polecat River and formed line of battle.

Soon after noon we received word that Warren had reached the North Anna River, and was there engaged with the enemy. We pushed forward and reached the river about 7.30 P.M. The roads were bad, and marching difficult. Warren had crossed the river at Jericho Ford, while the Second Corps had crossed four miles below, at Chesterfield Bridge, and the two corps were trying to connect on the south bank of the river. It was a critical situation, because the Northern army was divided, while the Southern army could concentrate its whole strength against either wing without fear of reinforcement from the other wing. Heavy artillery firing from the north bank upon the part of the enemy's line which separated our wings was kept up the most of the night. At 3 o'clock in the morning of the 24th, the Sixth Corps was awakened and crossed and went into position on the right of the Fifth Corps, and in a short time were protected by a strong line of works.

I spent most of the day in the works with orders to report to headquarters any signs of a movement in our front. On the 25th we were occupied in moving our lines to the left and in supporting the Fifth Corps in an attempt to connect with the Second Corps, and in the afternoon I was charged with the duty of seeing that the division picket line was properly posted. We had occasional bursts of musketry fire on the picket line.

On the 26th, General Russell was moved from our right and sent to the support of Griffin (Fifth Corps), and we had to occupy the line he had vacated. Heavy showers occurred during the afternoons of the 24th, 25th, and 26th. Orders to be ready to move were received at 6 P.M., and at 9 we started on our return

across the river. Between the darkness and the mud it was very difficult to keep the troops in the line of march and over the bridges. It took us until 3 o'clock in the morning to reach Chesterfield Station, a distance of only five miles, where we halted and rations were issued.

At 6 A.M. on the 27th we started anew, and after a slow muddy march of fifteen miles on a sultry day, we reached Taylor's Ford on the Pamunkey River, where line of battle was formed and we halted for the night.

On May 28th we were aroused at 3 A.M. and started at daylight. We crossed the Pamunkey at Nelson's Ford, which we reached at 8 o'clock and crossed on pontoons. After an hour's halt, we moved out a couple of miles and formed line of battle on a ridge of hills. We were now near Hanovertown,[1] which is thirty-two miles from Chesterfield Station and seventeen miles from Richmond.

May 29th was devoted to reconnoissances in force by the different corps of Meade's army. The Sixth Corps went towards Hanover Court-House, a partially retrograde movement some ten miles to the northwest of Hanovertown. No enemy was developed, and on the 30th, in trying to join the Second Corps to the south of us, we got entangled in a swamp which delayed our arrival until it was too late for the Second Corps to attack. We were a short distance from Haw's shop, and fourteen miles from Richmond.

On May 31st we were in line at daylight, and, under General Neill's direction, I was sent to explore the picket line and report what was in our front. From this and other reports, the corps and division commanders came to the conclusion that the line occupied by

[1] See War Map 81 (3).

the Confederates in our front was too strong by nature and art to be successfully attacked in front. Sheridan had been directed to occupy and hold Old Cold Harbor, and the Sixth and Eighteenth Corps were ordered from the right of the line at Haw's store to go to Sheridan's support at Old Cold Harbor.

It was towards midnight when the corps began to move. The weather was oppressively hot. Our division was to follow the wagon trains, and about midnight I was sent with an orderly to watch and report when the trains had passed, so that we could begin our march. This occupied me the rest of the night, and it was daylight before the roads were sufficiently clear for the Second Division to start.

June 1st was a day of oppressive heat. The soil, pulverized and kicked into the air by the thousands of feet of horses and men who for hours were marching by us, made the atmosphere in the rear of the column almost suffocating. I never knew a more uncomfortable day's march than that of our division on June 1, 1864. The distance we had to go was fifteen miles. The roads were blind and unfamiliar, and the movement of the two advance divisions and of the trains was very slow and very exhausting. The prize for which we were contending was Old Cold Harbor, which, on account of the large number of roads that centred there, was a strategic point of much importance.

The First and Third Divisions of the Sixth Corps arrived at the rendezvous about 10 o'clock in the morning. The Second Division was so delayed by the wagon trains that it was 2 o'clock before they joined the rest of the corps. The Eighteenth Corps had been marching for twenty-four hours, and had made twenty-five miles, and reached the rendezvous shortly after

our arrival. By 5 o'clock our line of battle was formed. The Sixth Corps was on the left. General Ricketts's (Third) division formed the right of the corps line, resting on the road running from Old to New Cold Harbor. Russell's (First) division was on his left and Neill's (Second) division was in reserve, with its left refused to protect the left flank of the corps. North of the road the Eighteenth Corps was formed, with Devens's (Third) division on its left resting on the road and Brooke's (First) division extending their line towards the north, and Martindale's (Second) division in reserve, with its right refused to protect the right flank of that corps.

The battle opened with artillery, and both the Sixth and the Eighteenth Corps advanced to the attack with much spirit, and succeeded in capturing the first line of works, but were repulsed at the second line. The Sixth Corps captured five hundred prisoners, and the Eighteenth, two hundred and fifty. But the two corps accomplished what they were sent there for. They held Old Cold Harbor. The loss of the Sixth Corps in killed and wounded exceeded twelve hundred men. The Thirty-seventh Massachusetts had one man killed and six wounded. Personally I was very busy carrying orders and reporting to General Neill the conditions in the different parts of the line. During the evening General Neill directed me to make a personal examination of our division lines the next morning at daylight and to report to him, which I accordingly did.

During the morning, the Second Corps was brought from the right of the line at Haw's store and placed on our left, a march of twelve miles. This relieved Neill's division, which was transferred from the reserve to the part of the line held by Ricketts's division on the pre-

vious day. The Eighteenth Corps extended their line on the right to connect with Warren (Fifth Corps), and farther north was the Ninth Corps under Burnside, in rather attenuated line to cover our base at West Point. Sheridan, with two divisions of cavalry, covered the left flank of the army, while Wilson, with one division, performed a similar service on our right flank. These various changes occupied the second day of June. An early morning attack had been planned and ordered by General Grant, but between the heat and the exhausted condition of the soldiers, the army could not be made ready, and it was postponed until 5 o'clock in the evening, and then again until 4.30 the next day.

By that time, of course, the Confederate army had duplicated the defences of Spottsylvania. Barlow's division of the Second Corps on the left of the Union line succeeded in taking a part of the Confederate line in their front. The first line, which effected the capture, was not supported by the second line of the division, and consequently had to withdraw, but they stubbornly fortified and held the ground closely in front. The other divisions of the Second Corps did not penetrate the enemy's lines, although Gibbons's division made a stubborn fight, and the corps lost three thousand men.

The following description of the part taken by the Sixth Corps is taken from vol. iv., Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, page 335:

> The Sixth Corps at the appointed time instantly moved to the front. This corps was formed in two lines of battle, in the same order as on June 1—Ricketts on the right, Russell in the centre, and Neill in support. These troops advanced with great intrepidity. All that courage and soldierly bearing could accomplish these gallant men did.

At 6 A.M. news was received that Ricketts had carried the line in his front, but Russell was repulsed. It was up the gentle slope from the east face of Watt's Hill and ridge to the northward that Wright had to take his men. The gallant soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia were too well intrenched to have any trouble in resisting these assaults. The ground over which our men advanced was strewn with dead, dying, and wounded, and in less than half an hour Wright was repulsed at all points.

The corps lost about 1700 men in this attack. The Eighteenth Corps had a similar experience, and lost about 2000 men, and the Ninth Corps told the same tale. In fact, it was the culminating experience of the Army of the Potomac in its series of attacks on strongly fortified works, defended by an ably led and theretofore victorious army, fighting against invasion. They fought desperately, but with little hope. They lost in the neighborhood of ten thousand men,[1] and inflicted a loss of from a third to a half that number on their antagonists. The loss fell on the best and most seasoned material in our army. Furthermore, the enlistment of some of our three years' men now began to expire, and this meant an additional loss to the Army of the Potomac of from six to ten thousand of its choicest soldiers.

It was a sober day for the tired, twice-decimated and whipped army, when, at eventide, they sat down and counted their woes. They had gained a few rods in their advance on Richmond, and they resolutely set to work to hold it. The lines were so near in front of the Second and Sixth Corps that there was no room for pickets, so the main works became fortresses, frowning

[1] Fox in his *Regimental Losses*, at p. 541, states the loss of the Union army at Cold Harbor, 12,737.

at each other across a narrow gulf. Elaborate earthworks, with covered ways and traverses for the protection of the men, and embrasures and loopholes for our guns and muskets, were constructed. The firing was constant. If a head appeared above the parapet, the air in that vicinity was alive with bullets, and every now and then a shell would come crashing through the heaped-up earth. The men in front had to be constantly relieved. The air was foul with the stenches arising from unburied bodies of the fallen between the lines.

It was a part of my daily duty to inspect the lines, and I well remember the sickening odors that greeted my nostrils on the second or third day after the battle. Then a truce was arranged, and for two or three hours the men of the two armies mingled while each attended to the burial of their dead. Afterwards, a series of approaches outside of our lines with zigzag trenches leading to parallels were constructed, which exercised the ingenuity of our engineers and interested our soldiers, and drew from the enemy some mortar shells, as well as a good deal of ammunition, with which we were better acquainted. Fusillades of musketry fire at night now became very frequent, and kept us in constant expectation of an attack.

During this period, several shells burst uncomfortably near our headquarters, in fact one shell went through Captain Binney's tent. From June 2d to 15th, the Thirty-seventh had five killed and thirty wounded. The term of service of the Second Rhode Island expired on June 5th, and its battalion of three companies of re-enlisted men was attached to the Thirty-seventh.

Although the regiments in the front line of works were relieved every twenty-four hours, they were only retired to

a second or third line a short distance to the rear, where they remained forty-eight hours, when they returned to the front line; yet in the rear lines they were subjected to so many alarms, and were so crowded behind earthworks, that they got very little rest, and when, on the afternoon of June 12th, the army received orders to be ready to move that night, a sense of relief seemed to possess every one, and for the time officers and men forgot the gloom that had possessed them all since the battle of the 3d of June, and exhibited a spirit of cheerfulness.

CHAPTER XIII

FROM COLD HARBOR TO PETERSBURG

FROM JUNE 12 TO 17, 1864

IT was Sunday evening, June 12th, when we bade a glad adieu to the fateful field of Cold Harbor. At first we moved back about a mile and waited for the roads to be clear of the troops which were to precede us, and finally got under way about ten o'clock. I was charged with the duty of seeing that the different brigades followed each other in due order. It was after midnight before I was able to rejoin the staff at the head of the column. Our progress was slow because we were not familiar with the country. At best, marching an army in the dark is slow business, and when about six o'clock the next morning we halted an hour for breakfast, we found we had progressed only ten miles. After our halt we started again and crossed the Richmond and York Railroad at Summit Station,[1] where the old soldiers of my brigade recognized a camp they had occupied for a fortnight two years before.

Thence we moved by Hopkins Mill,[2] and crossed the Chickahominy at Jones's (or Forge) Bridge,[3] and, after

[1] War Map 20.

[2] About three miles due west of Tunstall's Station on the R. & Y. R. R. See War Map 92 (1).

[3] Compare War Map 17 (1).

crossing, formed line of battle and rested for the night. During the twenty hours since we started, we had covered a distance of twenty-five miles and had gone without sleep. We were very tired and slept hard that night.

The next morning we were aroused very early and commenced our march at four o'clock, and before noon had reached a place in the vicinity of Charles City Court-House, where we were halted and went into camp. We pitched our headquarters tents near a very comfortable farmhouse. It proved to be the overseer's house on a large plantation. Rich farm lands lay before us in every direction as far as the eye could see, but they were sparsely cultivated. Chickens and cherries were very abundant, and upon these we feasted. Ex-President John Tyler had his country residence in this vicinity.

After we got settled in camp, two or three of our staff mounted horses and went in search of the distinguished Virginian's home. The house was in charge of negro servants, who tried faithfully to keep watch and ward, but the soldiers soon invaded the premises, and upon being admitted into the rear, forced their way into the front of the house. It was a plain, comfortable habitation, on a slightly elevated plateau, surrounded by stately trees, with abundant bookshelves and many books, and indications of literary work by its recent occupants. Some books were carried off by the soldiers, and not a few letters from prominent leaders in the Confederacy to the ex-President were discovered and appropriated. Aside from this, I do not think much harm was done. The next day the place was protected by a guard.

We were encamped about a mile from Wilcox Landing[1]

[1] South of the Charles City Court-House. See War Map 92 (1).

on the James River, which was selected by our engineers for the location of a pontoon bridge, the construction of which they commenced on the afternoon of our arrival and completed at midnight. It consisted of 104 pontoon boats, each anchored in its place in the river and connected by beams, and the whole steadied by being connected at intervals with larger boats, also anchored. It was 2100 feet long. The Second Corps arrived at Wilcox Landing on Monday evening, June 13th, and, on Wednesday morning at daylight, they and their artillery had been transported on boats to the south side of the James. After daylight, the bridge was used to transfer the immense trains with the remainder of artillery and the cavalry from the north to the south side of the river. This occupied all day Wednesday, and a good part of Thursday, the 16th of June.

Meanwhile, we had moved our camp to the river bank, and were feasting on a fine view from the bluff overlooking the river and the surrounding country. During the morning of the 16th, the Fifth Corps was carried across the river on transports above and below the bridge. Finally orders came to embark the First and Third Divisions of the Sixth Corps on transports, and to land them at City Point, while the Second Division was to follow the teams and the artillery.

We finally crossed on the bridge at seven o'clock in the evening, and by a night march followed the trains towards Petersburg. It was a hot night. The dust beaten into powder by the hosts of horses and men ahead of us filled the air with a choking, stifling mixture that was hardly breathable. Our only relief was to wash out our mouths with water from our canteens; and unfortunately the supply of this was both poor and short. But after a march of sixteen miles, morning

found us in the vicinity of City Point. We expected here to rejoin the other two divisions of the Sixth Corps, but they were detained by General Butler. We rested a couple of hours and pushed forward, and after the issue of rations, joined the Ninth and Second Corps.

At four o'clock in the afternoon we moved forward and relieved the Eighteenth Corps in the front line of battle. Meanwhile, a most unfortunate misunderstanding of orders by the commanders of the Second and Eighteen Corps had resulted, during the afternoon and evening of June 15th, in the loss of an opportunity to capture Petersburg. The Eighteenth Corps, on leaving Cold Harbor, marched back to White House, and from there were transferred in transports down the York River and up the James to Bermuda Hundred, where they landed, and on June 14th they crossed the Appomattox River on pontoons, seven miles below Petersburg.

No wonder that Lee was greatly mystified by these movements of General Grant, and as his particular anxiety was the safety of Richmond, he was constantly on the lookout for an attack at some point on the defences of that city. He never dreamed of an attempt by Grant to capture Petersburg by way of reducing Richmond, until Wednesday morning, when word was brought to him that the Federal army was advancing on Petersburg from Bermuda Hundred, and that the Army of the Potomac was crossing the James River. During Wednesday the defences of Petersburg were occupied by less than five thousand Confederate soldiers, while the Eighteenth Corps was all day within five miles of the heart of the city, and the Second Corps could easily have joined the Eighteenth Corps by four o'clock in the afternoon of that day, while the earliest

reinforcements from Lee's army did not reach the Petersburg lines until sunset.

Failure to furnish rations to the Second Corps, as promised, in time for an early start in its march to Petersburg on Wednesday morning, together with a blind order that did not inform General Hancock that he was expected to capture Petersburg that afternoon, and an inaccurate map that carried him away from the intended rendezvous, combined to delay his final arrival until it was too late to attack. During the night Lee's army had begun to arrive, and the chance to capture by assault had vanished.

It looks very much as if Grant and Meade, one or both of them, on that Wednesday morning failed to see and comprehend the possible capture of Petersburg before nightfall, as clearly as they did later, when they learned how completely Lee was deceived by Grant's movement across the James, and how small was the force in front of Petersburg during the whole of that day. When they learned these facts they, of course, recognized that they had lost an opportunity to capture Petersburg, apparently through the delay of the Second Corps in arriving at its destination. For this they were inclined to blame General Hancock. Then the facts about the delayed rations and the imperfect order and misleading map came to light. But Hancock was sensitive and demanded an official investigation, and General Grant responded as follows:

The reputation of the Second Corps and its commander is so high, both with the public and in the army, that an investigation could not add to it. It cannot be tarnished by newspaper articles or scribblers. No official despatch has ever been sent from these headquarters which by any

construction could cast blame on the Second Corps or its commander for the part they have played in this campaign.

A doubt has occurred to me in this connection whether Petersburg would have been captured on that Wednesday if rations had been issued and the Second Corps had started as ordered, and if General Hancock's map had located Harrison's Creek in the right place, and his marching orders had indicated an attack that afternoon with the support of the Eighteenth Corps. The weather was oppressively hot. The Second Corps was exhausted by its long march of thirty-five miles from Cold Harbor to Wilcox Landing on Sunday night and all day Monday, and again had no opportunity to sleep on Tuesday night, when it was being transported across the James. The corps was then expected to march seventeen miles through a new and unfamiliar country over dusty roads, and on approaching Petersburg to reconnoitre through a country intersected by deep ravines, more or less protected by woods and several lines of hastily constructed entrenchments, which the Eighteenth Corps had already spent two days in exploring and attacking with indifferent success. The men would have been too tired, and the time too short before dark, to accomplish anything.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RICHMOND CAMPAIGN—PETERSBURG

FROM JUNE 17 TO JULY 7, 1864

NOTE.—The introductions to the chapters in brackets, the notes marked "C. S.," and the conclusion, were contributed, by the author's college classmate and lifelong friend, the Reverend Calvin Stebbins, who has bestowed much time and labor upon all parts of the work.—*W. S. T.*

[INTRODUCTION.—With the arrival of the Second Division of the Sixth Corps at Petersburg on the afternoon of June 17th, the story of his army experience as written out by Colonel Tyler comes to an end. What follows is made up of letters written at the time, and extracts from his diary. This diary he had written out himself in the form of a card catalogue, giving in chronological order the events of every day, with occasional reference to official reports to assist him in writing his story. The reader will miss the reflections of the historical student writing in the quiet of after years, but without doubt will find compensation in the freshness and vigor of letters written in the hurry and excitement of a soldier's life while in active service.

Perhaps it may be well to describe the situation on the 17th of June, 1864.[1] The objective of the Army of the

[1] For the main line of the enemy's works before Petersburg, June 18th, see War Map 105 (7). I cannot locate the road by which the Second Division of the Sixth Corps came up from City Point to Petersburg on the 17th of June, 1864. But the War Maps 65 (1) and (9) show the route taken by the Eighteenth Corps and the works they captured. The Second Division relieved them in the lines on their arrival. It should

Potomac, after the withdrawal from Cold Harbor on the 12th of June, was the communications south of Richmond. The lieutenant-general was a firm believer in the utility of railroads in war, and felt that if he could get possession of the railroads south of Richmond, the position of the Rebel army would be untenable. By a masterly movement, he withdrew his army from Cold Harbor, and swung it around to Petersburg, some twenty miles south of Richmond.

Petersburg stands on the south bank of the Appomattox River. The general course of the river is from west to east, but a little below Petersburg it turns to the north, and in a few miles takes an easterly direction and flows into the James just above City Point. Petersburg was a railroad centre of great importance. It was connected by railroads with Richmond, City Point, and Norfolk. The terminals of the last two railroads were already in the hands of the Union army. But the Weldon Railroad, connecting with the Carolinas and with tidewater at Wilmington; the South Side Railroad, connecting with Lynchburg and the Valley of the Shenandoah; and the Richmond and Danville Railroad, which intersected the South Side Railroad at Burkeville, were all in the hands of the enemy, and Petersburg was connected on the south and west with the whole Southern Confederacy. There were also several wagon roads of importance which are often mentioned in the story of the siege. There was the Jerusalem Plank Road running two or three miles east of the Weldon Railroad and parallel to it; and along the westerly side of the Weldon Railroad was the Halifax Road running in the same direction; and still farther on, coming in from the southwest, was the Boyd-

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be remembered that, owing to imperfect maps, General Grant made a mistake in his order to General Hancock of the Second Corps, ordering him to take a position west of Harrison's Creek. This rivulet was a local affair, and no one knew anything about it. When found, it was within the enemy's lines. The Second Division was at first on the east side of the creek to the extreme left. The position they occupied may also be seen on War Map 77 (2).—C. S.

ton Plank Road. Over these roads to the west of the Weldon were hauled large quantities of produce for Lee's army. For forty-two weeks to come these roads and railroads will be the object of contention.[1]

We may now look at the situation from another point of view. The Confederate government had appointed General Beauregard to the command of the military department of North Carolina and Southern Virginia. He saw at once the importance of Petersburg, and divined with surer instinct than his chief what movement General Grant was likely to make after Cold Harbor, and at once strengthened the fortifications about Petersburg, which consisted at this time of a series of redoubts running from the Appomattox below the city to the river above, a distance of about seven miles. On the east side, where the Union army was likely to approach, was a line of thirteen redoubts on commanding hills about two miles from the city, and running out some three miles from the river. These redoubts were connected by infantry parapets with high profiles and ditches. They were very strong and a few men could defend them against many times their number.

It was not General Grant's intention that the Army of the Potomac should have anything to do with the capture of Petersburg. Before leaving Cold Harbor, he sent General Smith with the Eighteenth Corps to White House, and then by water to Bermuda Hundred, where his command was reinforced to about eighteen thousand men, from the Army of the James. At 1.30 on the afternoon of June 15th, General Smith, in pursuance of orders, came upon the outer defences of Petersburg, and at seven in the evening ordered an assault which was successful; but it was found that in the rear of the line captured were some heavy profile works, which kept up a galling artillery fire. The Second Division of the Eighteenth Corps (colored) was ordered to carry the works by assault, which they gallantly did, capturing five

[1] See War Maps 93 (1), 40 (1), 17 (1), 56 (1).

of the redans, Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11,[1] with guns, prisoners and ammunition.

The way into Petersburg was now open. It was late, but there was a full moon, and there was no great risk of a disastrous defeat, for at 6.30 that evening General Hancock came up with two divisions of the Second Corps. But General Smith had not the courage to follow up his success and seize the prize within his reach, and deferred the advance until the next morning. In the meantime, troops had been poured into Petersburg, and a new line of fortifications had been built. Speaking of this delay, General Grant, who felt that he had made ample provision for the work to be done, says, "I do not think there is any doubt that Petersburg itself could have been carried without much loss; . . . This would have given us control of both the Weldon and South Side Railroads." (*Personal Memoirs*, ii., 298). He was hurrying forward troops in case of disaster, but remained at Bermuda Hundred to be there in person to direct operations in case Lee should throw his whole army upon Butler. At ten o'clock on the morning of the 16th, General Burnside, with the Ninth Corps, came up and took position on the left. At three o'clock on the morning of the 17th, the First and Second Brigades of the Second Division, under General Potter, dashed forward, and in a most gallant manner carried two redoubts, capturing guns, prisoners, colors, and a large quantity of small arms. There was much hard fighting all day.[2]

In the afternoon, General Neill, commanding the Second Division of the Sixth Corps, sent the assistant adjutant-general of the Army of the Potomac the following despatch: "June 17, 1864—2 P.M. Am at the fingerpost pointing to Ninth Corps, on main road, with my Second Division, Artillery Brigade, Colonel Tompkins, Sixth Corps, and proper complement of ammunition wagons and ambulances

[1] See War Map 105 (7).

[2] O. R., xl., pt. 1, p. 545.

of the corps. My men have been marching all night and morning."[1]

In reply to this despatch, a staff officer was sent from headquarters to conduct General Neill and his command to a place not indicated in the report. But at 4 P.M., General Meade ordered him to relieve the troops of the Eighteenth Corps, and, at 11 P.M., inquired if he had obeyed the order, and received reply that his division was in line of battle, and had relieved Brooks's division, Eighteenth Corps; was unable to do more.[2]

It will be remembered that Captain Tyler was at this time acting on the staff of General Neill, and that the Thirty-seventh Regiment was in the Fourth Brigade of this division. Before the Army of the Potomac had crossed the James, they received rumors that General Smith with the Eighteenth Corps had carried the works before Petersburg, but on arriving there they found the old enemy confronting them. Let us now turn to the diary.—C. S.]

AT about 2 o'clock, Friday, June 17th, we moved forward until within a mile of General Smith's line of battle at Mrs. Bailey's house. At 4 o'clock we relieved the Eighteenth Corps. Our line ran along the crest of a line of hills. The Ninth, Second, and Fifth Corps charged to the left of us and drove the enemy back towards the city to our left. The Thirty-seventh started at 9 P.M., and moved to the vicinity of the Jordan house,[3] but were not engaged that night.

Saturday, June 18th. An attack was ordered at 4 A.M.; the line was formed and advanced to find that the enemy had evacuated their first line. We formed for an attack on their second line. At 12 M. advanced a half mile and were checked. General Wheaton (First

[1] O. R., xl., pt. 2, p. 132.
[2] *Id.*, p. 133.
[3] See War Map 40 (1).

Brigade, Second Division, Sixth Corps) on the front line advanced to a point within three-fourths of a mile of the city. We could see the church spires very plainly. About 11 o'clock, the Thirty-seventh recrossed the railroad [the railroad to City Point], occupied the vacant works and connected with Wheaton's brigade on their right. Moved forward and attacked at 12 M. Got mixed with Wheaton's brigade. At 3 o'clock, advanced some four hundred yards, but were not supported by the Second Corps on our left. The Thirty-seventh lost four men killed.[1]

Sunday, June 19th. Up at 5 o'clock, and made a tour of the lines. Found things quiet. We occupy a hill which overlooks the plain and commands a fine view of the city. General Grant and staff and our corps commanders have all been over here at times during the afternoon. Brady photographed Meade and his staff.[2] The First and Third Divisions of the Sixth Corps which had been with Butler came up this evening. The Vermont Brigade relieved the First and Fourth this evening

[1] The location of the Second Division at 7.15 A.M. is indicated by the despatch of an aide-de-camp from General Neill's headquarters to General Meade: "General Neill's advance has reached Harrison's Creek, [See War Map 65 (9)] and is extended along it, with his right running some distance along the Appomattox. The enemy are seen in position, with their left on the Appomattox. Our force is still on the north bank of the creek." (O.R., xl., pt. 2, p. 191.) The battles of the 17th and 18th were fought by General Meade, and were terrible battles on account of the persistency and the losses. General Grant, writing from City Point at 10 P.M., says: "I am perfectly satisfied that all has been done that could be done, and that the assaults to-day were called for by all the appearances and information that could be obtained. Now we will rest the men and use the spade for their protection until a new vein can be struck." (O. R., xl., pt. 2, p. 157.)—C. S.

[2] Brady's photographs have recently been published by the Review of Reviews Company in ten volumes, entitled *Photographic History of the Civil War.* (1911).

in the lines. The term of service of the Tenth Massachusetts expired, and they started for home. One hundred and sixty men whose terms had not expired were temporarily attached to the Thirty-seventh. The Thirty-seventh to-day lost one man killed. At dark we were relieved by the Vermont Brigade.

Letter to his mother, June 19, 1864:

I don't know how long I shall be able to write to you this morning, but I will begin, and write until I am interrupted, and then send what I have written.

Last Thursday night we crossed the James and marched all night, and the next day guarded the trains until 1 P.M., when we came upon the Tenth Army Corps, and in the course of the afternoon we relieved the Eighteenth Army Corps. The other two divisions went by transports to City Point, and were detailed by General Butler at Bermuda Hundred. So that was the way I spent my birthday. It was awfully hot and I felt about as badly as a man could and live.

We got our troops into a magnificent position and were not engaged in the attack that night, so that I slept and felt better. Saturday we commenced fighting at four o'clock in the morning, and kept at it at intervals all day. We gained about a mile, and took some pretty strong works without much resistance, and evening found us where we could look right into the city of Petersburg, some three quarters of a mile distant. Our regiment was not engaged, and I think lost no men. Yesterday brought me two letters from home, the latest written last Sunday and Monday from you. They were very welcome, I assure you. You ask me about General Neill. He is a very agreeable gentleman, but is not a religious man. My relations with him are very pleasant, and I am on pleasant terms with the staff. My duties are not very arduous, consisting mostly of carrying orders and seeing

them executed, and the various duties of an aide-de-camp.

General Meade has just been here sitting in my tent for half an hour, and consequently I had to vacate. I heard him talk, but was not introduced to him. He with several other general officers was busy talking over military matters.

My Sundays have usually been very quiet, but to-day it has been an incessant hubbub at our headquarters. The general officers of the army have congregated here for consultation, consequently our tents have been crowded with staff officers. The coast, however, is now almost clear, and we are enjoying comparative quiet. Things are generally quiet on the lines, and the men seem to be resting.

So we have a checkered career out here in the army. All sorts of experiences attend us. The men, however, look rather haggard after their terrible campaigning experience, and they don't have the same amount of spirit they had when they started out. The charges made yesterday lacked spirit, and the organizations of the army are so thinned out that it is not to be wondered at. I must close.

Monday, June 20th. Visited the lines in the mist this morning. No changes. About 9 o'clock the enemy commenced throwing shells from the hills across the Appomattox on our right flank, which burst uncomfortably near our headquarters, wounding two of our soldiers. We moved to corps headquarters and the shells followed us. Captain Young had a narrow escape. At night we were ordered to relieve the Second Division of the Second Corps.[1]

[1] At 8 o'clock on the morning of the 20th, the right of the Sixth Corps rested on the Appomattox. Two divisions, the First and Second, were in line, and the Third (Ricketts's) was in reserve. At 8.30, General Wright received orders from General Meade to relieve one of Hancock's divisions, and hold from the Hare house to the river. The Hare house stood just to the right of where Fort Stedman was afterwards built. One division was to watch the river to the right and he was ordered to

Letter to his classmate, M. F. Dickinson, June 20, 1864:

Your welcome letter reached me yesterday and the same mail brought me one from Ruf [Captain Rufus P. Lincoln], so I had a double portion of pleasure. If ever a man would appreciate letters, it is at such a time as this, in the midst of a severe campaign with all its fatigues and anxieties upon you. Then when you feel downhearted and almost discouraged, there is nothing like a friendly letter to cheer you up. We are here within a mile of the centre of Petersburg, apparently full tilt once more against the Army of Northern Virginia. We can at any time most certainly destroy the city, and the possibility is that we could take the city, but whether we could occupy it after we have possessed ourselves of it is another question. The trouble seems to be just now that their cannon on the crest on the other side of the Appomattox command everything on this side. So what we have to do is to wait and see. We had a fierce little fight on Saturday, and drove the Rebs more than a mile, occupying works really much stronger than any that I have seen since we left Washington. They were not fully defended, and we lost very few men in the assault. The works and position that the Eighteenth Corps took from Beauregard, however, on the Thursday previous were magnificent. I have never seen better, and properly defended, the whole Army of the Potomac could not have taken them by assault. But fortunately for us we had militia to contend with, and gained an easy victory. The darkies are as thick as pebble stones around us, and it would amuse you to see some of our big talkers, stragglers (members of Haversack's Brigade, as we call them), standing in the midst of these groups of negroes, and telling them all sorts of frightful yarns. The darkies are growing

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intrench as strongly as possible. At 8.30 in the evening, General Wright reported that the corps had taken the position indicated and that a working party was ordered for 4 o'clock the next morning to complete a work for guns.—C. S. (See O. R., xl., pt. 2, p. 249.)

pale by contact with the Army of the Potomac. I really believe they would demoralize them (the darkies) if they stayed here long. A negro was hanged near our headquarters this morning, by order of the President, for an attempted rape. It drew so large a crowd that the Rebs commenced shelling. Consequently two of our men here at headquarters got wounded. The Tenth Massachusetts has started on its homeward trip this morning. This leaves the Thirty-seventh the last representative of our brigade. We have detachments of from fifty to one hundred men each from other regiments, but our whole brigade to-day numbers 407 men. The Thirty-seventh has, I believe, only a little over 200. We started out in this campaign with over 600 strong. Last week was Class Day at Amherst. How I should have liked to be there and enjoy it with you and Ruf. Binney has just perpetrated a joke that I must put on paper for your edification. He says that the works of Shelley are prevalent among us these days. They are just bringing up some 30-pounder Parrott guns to be mounted on some of these commanding crests. So I suppose we shall have music now. . . . I should like to see you for a little while. How we would talk![1]

[1] After the ineffectual assaults of the 18th, there was little fighting for several days, although there was a good deal of firing especially at night to prevent surprise. The Union lines were extended to the Jerusalem Plank Road, and so strengthened that they could be held by a few men. Butler was ordered to extend his lines to the point on the Appomattox held by the Sixth Corps.

On the 21st, General Grant intimated to General Meade that he desired to envelop Petersburg, as far as possible without attacking fortifications, and without bringing on a battle unless the enemy exposed himself equally; he suggested a movement to the left of Warren who, with the Fifth Corps, held the left of the Union army. Arrangements were immediately made for a movement to the left. The Sixth and Second Corps were relieved by the Ninth, and the Eighteenth and Second were ordered to advance to the left of the Fifth Corps and pivot on that, keeping its right in connection with the left of the Fifth. The Sixth Corps was to pass in the rear of the Second and connect with its left. The country through which the Sixth had to move was densely

Tuesday, June 21st. Very hot. President Lincoln rode by.

Letter of the 23d says:

I commenced a letter to you Tuesday P.M., but was called away to go to corps headquarters. There we found President Lincoln and Generals Grant and Meade being serenaded by a band of music. That afternoon General Neill was relieved of his command in the Sixth Corps, and ordered to report to the Eighteenth Corps. He invited me to remain on his staff, and said that I should go with him anyway, but on talking to Colonel Edwards, I found that he was very much opposed to it. So after staying over night with the general, I declined.

General Neill was a most agreeable officer to serve with, very gentlemanly and considerate of everybody, an experienced officer and an intelligent man. The Thirty-seventh lost one man to-day, F. B. Crocker, of Company F. Relieved by Martindale's division and moved to the left in an attempt to capture the Weldon and South Side Railroads. Slow and tedious. No sleep for two nights. The Second and Sixth Corps were directed to move independently.

Wednesday, June 22d. Spent a restless night. Bade General Neill good-by, and rode back to rejoin the corps five or six miles on the left of the line. General Wheaton invited me to retain my position on his staff while he was in command. The Second Corps was repulsed while attempting to extend our lines to the left, and we retreated a short distance. At 7 P.M. we advanced a

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wooded with a thick underbrush, and as progress was slow, General Meade became impatient and ordered the corps to move independently. As a result they became separated, and the enemy taking advantage of it, attacked the unprotected left flank of the Second Corps, capturing four guns and seventeen hundred prisoners.—C. S.

half mile beyond our original position early in the day. We protected the left flank. The Second Corps, Gibbon's division, lost 1700 men and four guns. Great confusion prevailed at headquarters. The Thirty-seventh was on the extreme left of the corps. Two companies, F and G, were sent to guard a bridge running across a swamp.

Thursday, June 23d. The order to attack at 3.30 was for some reason postponed.[1] We lay in a scorching hot sun all day. Captain Beattie with sixty sharpshooters and a battalion of infantry (Fourth and Eleventh Vermont) penetrated one and one-half miles to the Weldon Railroad. At 2 P.M. he was driven back, and A. P. Hill's corps went around our left flank and captured 500 men from the Vermont Brigade, and killed and wounded quite a number more. The fight was sharp while it lasted. Captain William C. Tracy, a brother of J. Evarts Tracy, was killed. I was out on the field with Major Long, assistant adjutant-general of our division, endeavoring to bring up reinforcements.[2]

Letter to his mother, June 26, 1864:

This awfully hot Sunday morning I am going to try to write a letter home. We have been sweltering in this hot Virginia sun with the thermometer at 102 in the shade now for three days. It seems as if the perspiration runs in streams all the time and brings no relief. Wednesday and Thursday they kept us trotting back and forth in line of

[1] It was found that the enemy had withdrawn.—C. S.

[2] See O. R., xl., pt. 1, pp. 495, 502, and 503. Captain William C. Tracy of the Fourth Vermont was a man of great courage. General L. A. Grant in his report of the day's doings says: "His dead body was found on the field next day, surrounded by the muskets of his men lying on the ground, giving evidence that he had rallied around him the men of his command, and that they surrendered only when their gallant leader had fallen," p. 503.—C. S.

battle over a mile of ground according as our flank was menaced or the enemy disappeared in our front. In the fight of Thursday afternoon, they came down on our flank and gobbled up some five hundred men belonging to our splendid Vermont Brigade, which formed a very heavy skirmish line in front of the left flank of the army. They cut through the Third Division skirmish line on our right and got to the rear of the Vermont boys and took a good portion of two battalions. This was very provoking, as we probably inflicted little loss in return, and we were afraid to rush out to attack them, as we were formed in a single line and there was danger of their turning our flank. So we had to lie still and let them gobble up our men, and it was done so quietly that we hardly knew we had suffered any loss. . . . I ought to be happy that I am well and able to endure, and have been saved from sickness and wounds during this terrible campaign.

Tuesday, June 28th. I played chess with Stevens.

A letter of this date says:

I thought I would write you a line before I leave division headquarters. General Getty has arrived this afternoon and takes immediate command of the division, and as he has a sufficient staff of his own, there is no longer any need of my service here, so I am going back to the regiment. I enjoyed my experience of staff life very much, and it was profitable to me in several ways. It improved me physically, and broadened my view of military life. I made acquaintances and saw the army officers of higher rank that I never should have seen or known had I remained on duty with the regiment. I was enabled to go through this terribly severe campaign with comparative comfort, and I am not sure that I could have stood it had I been on foot and in line.

The same letter relates that I was expecting to be very busy at the end of the month, being also the end

of the quarter on July 1st, when I should have both my monthly and quarterly returns to prepare and forward.

At the house where we are staying now, there are any quantity of old family documents scattered around, and the other day one of the officers picked up a deed of this place dated 1665, and the bargain was that it should be paid for in tobacco. So you see that we are among the early settlements of Virginia.

Letter to his father, July 1, 1864:

Well, I am sitting here beneath a wide-spreading mulberry tree somewhere in Virginia, the exact locality it would be hard to describe. We are some three miles lower on the railroad than we were the last time I wrote. Tuesday afternoon I returned to the regiment on the arrival of General Getty. Wednesday I took an early start and went down to our old camp at Petersburg to get some of my company papers out of my valise. I saw Binney and General Neill. General Neill is very busy organizing the inspector-general's department in the Eighteenth Corps, and Binney is helping him. The general seemed very glad to see me, although I only saw him for a moment. . . .

Well, I got back to our camp about 2 P.M., and in about an hour we were under orders to go to the support of Wilson's cavalry.[1] So off we started, and went to Reams Station, seven miles. Formed line of battle, stayed there

[1] General Wilson, with about 5000 horses and twelve guns, had been sent on the 21st of June around the right of the enemy to destroy the Danville and South Side Railroads. He did a hard bit of work. He marched between the 21st of June and the 1st of July 335 miles, and destroyed more than sixty miles of railway, every railroad station, depot, water-tank, woodpile, bridge, trestle-work, tool-house, and sawmill, from fifteen miles of Petersburg to the Roanoke River. But he was intercepted on his return by a force he could not break through at Reams Station, and the Sixth Corps was sent to his assistance, but arrived too late as he was obliged to find another way out. (O. R., xl., pt. 1, p. 620.)—C. S.

yesterday and tore up some four miles of track, and last night returned to this place, where we have been lying to-day. It is awfully hot this afternoon. I am at present acting as major of the regiment under Lieutenant Colonel Montague, and am very pleasantly situated. I have no news to tell from the boys, except that they are all well—what there is left of them.[1]

Saturday, July 2d. Mother writes that she has inaugurated and is preparing a festival for July 4th for the benefit of the soldiers. They are to have tableaux, ice cream, gypsies and fortune-telling; music and sports at the gymnasium, and suppers at the hall under the church. All the town is aiding.

Sunday, July 3d. Spent a quiet day. Hot and suffocating. Service in the evening after dress parade.

Monday, July 4th. Very quiet all the morning. Paid in the afternoon. Finished my muster rolls this morning.

Tuesday, July 5th. We started to build a new line of works, in front of our old line, with a very strong heavy relief. Mother writes results of festival to date $437—expects $112 more will come in.[2]

[1] An outline of the movements of the Second Division from June 12th to July 9th is given in the report of General Getty, O. R. xl., pt. 1, p. 494.

[2] The line of works here referred to may be seen on War Map 77 (2). It is the upper dark line running east and west and connecting the fortifications in front with those in the rear. Bowen at page 346 says that the brigade at this time mustered about five hundred of officers and men.

For some days General Wright had been reporting to headquarters that nothing of importance had transpired in front of the lines of the Sixth Corps, and it is no wonder that under the circumstances the soldier would find little to record. But at noon on the 5th, General Grant informed General Meade that the enemy under General Early, who had been advancing down the Shenandoah Valley, had arrived at the Balti-

Wednesday, July 6th. An order was issued that the Fourth Brigade of the Second Division be discontinued, and that the Thirty-seventh, with attached companies of the Seventh and Tenth Massachusetts, be transferred to the Third Brigade, First Division.[1]

The Third Brigade, First Division, was composed of the Forty-ninth, Eighty-second, and One Hundred Nineteenth Pennsylvania, Fifth Wisconsin Battalion, Twenty-third Pennsylvania Veterans and Thirty-seventh Massachusetts with attachments. Colonel Edwards commanded the brigade. This was the brigade that was originally commanded by General Hancock, and consisted of the Forty-third New York, Forty-ninth Pennsylvania, Fifth Wisconsin, and Sixth Maine. Under him it achieved distinction at the battle of Williamsburg, May 5, 1862, where it defeated the Confederate column commanded by two of the ablest generals in the Army of Northern Virginia—Hill and Early. It was one of the brigades making up the famous light division of the Sixth Corps. In November, 1863, this brigade, under the command of General D. A. Russell, charged over the parapet of the fort at Rappahannock Station, and with bayonets and muskets used as clubs, compelled the surrender of seventeen hundred men. When General Upton was allowed to select twelve regiments from the Sixth Corps for his column of attack on the Salient at Spottsylvania on the 10th of May, 1864, four of them were selected from the Third Brigade, to wit: The Fifth

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more and Ohio Railroad, and ordered him to send a division of good troops to Baltimore. General Meade at once ordered General Wright to send a division of the Sixth Corps, and he selected the Third Division, General Ricketts, which started immediately for City Point.—C. S.

[1] O. R. xl., pt. 3, p. 46.

Wisconsin, Sixth Maine, and the One Hundred Forty-eighth and the One Hundred Nineteenth Pennsylvania.

Thursday, July 7th. This morning at six o'clock we moved into our new camp, in a beautiful piece of woods. Our headquarters are the best of the season. We donned the red cross on our caps and thought to have a little rest.

The same day he wrote to his brother:

Colonel Montague has gone to attend a court martial, and I have seated myself at his table and am going to take my ease with my pen. Since my return to the regiment I have been kept pretty busy making up back accounts, forwarding my papers, etc. We have been building a new line of rifle-pits, or rather breastworks, and now, just as we are ready to occupy them, the order comes transferring us to the First Division.

We have been expecting this for some time, and it gives Colonel Edwards command of General Russell's old brigade, the brigade that did so splendidly at Rappahannock Station. General Russell now commands the division, and we are all great admirers of him and willing to be under his command, although we have the greatest confidence in General Getty. . . .

We have a mighty stiff medical director on our corps, and yesterday he came out with an order driving the Sanitary and Christian Commissions from the corps. I think it is outrageous. They have been very zealous in furnishing the troops with all sorts of vegetables and many other things of which there is the greatest need, and now for him, through a mere whim, to drive them away, I think is too bad. I have been living on lemonade for the past fortnight. There is nothing that tastes so good, but as we have to buy lemons at sutler's prices, it would ruin us to keep it up a great while. One week from to-morrow is Commencement at Amherst. How I should like to be present to hear you

speak! We are having very agreeable rest and were surely in need of it.

The Third Division of our corps started this morning for Baltimore. It reminded us of our start a little later than this a year ago for New York. We almost wished we were in their place. But it would not be strange if they found something to do up there before their return. No telling!

CHAPTER XV

TO THE DEFENCE OF WASHINGTON

JULY 8 TO 24, 1864

[INTRODUCTION.—While General Grant was engaged with the siege of Petersburg, things were going very badly in the Valley of the Shenandoah. This valley was of great importance to the enemy. It furnished their army with an almost unlimited supply of grain, beeves, sheep, and horses, and it afforded a convenient avenue for the invasion of the North; and, in case of defeat, its mountain barriers on the east afforded protection to a retreating column whether great or small. It had been the scene of many a humiliation to the national arms. General Sigel had been appointed to the command of the Department of West Virginia, and when the great campaign began by order of the lieutenant-general along all lines on the 4th of May, Sigel was already advancing up the valley; but he was disastrously defeated on the 15th of May at Newmarket. He was relieved at once, and General Hunter was selected for the command. Hunter received his orders from General Grant to advance to Gordonsville, Charlottesville, or Lynchburg, and to destroy the railroads and the James River Canal. Hunter advanced rapidly and made a very brilliant campaign, but was tempted to go to Lynchburg, a point of very great importance, where he was confronted by a large force drawn from Lee's army. He had not ammunition enough to risk a battle, and retired

without loss to the Ohio, and thus the valley was left open to an invasion of the North. General Lee had sent General Early into the valley with a strong force, and as there was nothing now between the Confederate general and Washington, he went on by rapid marches until his course was checked for a day by General Wallace in Maryland, who led against him a much smaller force and was defeated at the Monocacy, thirty miles from Washington (July 9th). But the defeat was in reality a great victory, for the delay he caused the enemy saved the capital. The Third Division of the Sixth Corps covered General Wallace's retreat, and in his report he speaks in high terms of their steady courage and discipline, and adds: "The men of the Third Division were not whipped, but retired reluctantly, under my orders. They bore the brunt of the battle with a coolness and steadiness which I venture to say has not been exceeded in any battle during the war."[1]

General Grant had already ordered the Nineteenth Corps, just arriving at Fortress Monroe from Louisiana, to proceed to Washington, and on the evening of the 9th, Major-General Wright received an order, dated at 8.50, directing him with his corps to proceed at once to City Point, embark there and report to Major-General Halleck on arriving at Washington. Ten minutes after, at 9 o'clock, in a requisition on the chief quartermaster, General Wright says: "I am ordered to march my corps to City Point. There will be about 11,000 men and they will start within an hour."[2]

In the campaign which is about to commence, the Sixth Corps will render signal service to the country in saving Washington from the hands of the enemy. Their first campaign in the Shenandoah Valley was a failure, but it will be followed by another which will rank among the most brilliant campaigns of the war.

On the evening of the 10th, after the Sixth Corps had embarked for Washington, General Grant telegraphed President Lincoln: "I have sent a whole corps, commanded by an

[1] O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 191. [2] *Id.*, xl., pt. 3, p. 106.

excellent officer,"[1] and on the 12th he telegraphed General Halleck: "Give orders assigning Maj.-Gen. Wright to supreme command of all troops moving out against the enemy regardless of the rank of other commanders."[2] The next day the order was issued by the President and General Wright was informed of his position.[3]

It was General Grant's wish to unite the forces under General Wright and those under General Hunter who were at Harper's Ferry, cut off the Confederate column, and either capture or cripple it. But Early, by rapid movements, slipped between the two Union armies and made his escape. General Grant did not see the Sixth Corps again until it was time to go into winter quarters. He could not press the siege of Petersburg with the vigor he wished, but he held on with superb tenacity and patience, although the Rebel army which confronted him was sometimes almost equal in numbers to his own.

The Thirty-seventh is now called to a new field of experience, and we may turn to the card diary.—C. S.]

FRIDAY, July 8th. Petersburg. We are occupying the quarters vacated by General Hamblin. I have been very busy all day making out returns and have completed my quartermaster's returns.

Saturday, July 9th. Quiet all day. About 10 P.M., we received orders to pack and start for City Point; got under way and kept moving all night.

Sunday, July 10th. We reached City Point at 5 A.M. Lay in the hot sun all day, and embarked on board the propeller, *Perit*, for Washington at 7 P.M. Letter of 11th says: "We got on board our boat at seven last night and have been sailing since. My eyes trouble me so much that I am going to give up writing and reading entirely."[4]

[1] O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 155. [2] *Id.*, p. 222. [3] *Id.*, pp. 261, 284.
[4] The command was shipped on board of transports. O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 271.

Monday, July 11th. Passed Fortress Monroe this morning at 9. A French man-of-war was drilling its marines in the harbor. The seamen running over the masts looked like rats. Enjoyed a shower, the first we have experienced for forty days. The trip was enlivened by singing in the afternoon. In the evening the wind blew almost a gale.[1]

Tuesday, July 12th. We passed Aquia Creek, Mathias Point, and Mount Vernon, and this morning reached Washington at noon, and found the "Rebs" within four miles of the city. We marched out Fourteenth Street by Brightwood, through the heavily timbered gates near Fort Stevens. President Lincoln, General Wright and others were visible on the parapet of the fort as we passed through the gates. We formed a part of a line of battle on the right, and moved forward

[1] A portion of the Second Division of the Sixth Corps arrived at Washington about noon on the 11th and found all in confusion. Rumors had hardened down into facts, and it was believed that a greater part of Lee's army was in front of the capital. There were several major-generals and a score or more of brigadiers in the city, but each had a separate command, and there was no head either to organize a defence or plan an attack upon the enemy. Orders were issued rapidly, and as rapidly countermanded. General Wright on arrival in the city received orders from General Halleck to go into camp between Chain Bridge and the line of defences near the river. (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 207.) At 1.40 P.M. he received another order through Major-General Augur from General Halleck: "Please stop General Wright's movement up the Potomac and send his command up Seventh Street to rendezvous near the Military Asylum." (*Id.*, p. 209.) Later in the afternoon came another order, commanding him to report with his command to General McCook at Crystal Spring, near Fourteenth Street. At 4.10 P.M., General Wright, from Fort Stevens, reports to General Augur: "The head of my column has nearly reached the front, and, at the suggestion of Major-General McCook, I have directed them to bivouac at Crystal Spring, about half a mile in rear." (*Id.*, p. 208.) General Wright was of the opinion that there was only a thin skirmish line in front of the fort, and offered to put his veterans in and clean them out, but the offer was declined.—C. S.

nearly a mile, the enemy retiring before us. We were not heavily engaged, but four or five men in the regiment were wounded. William H. Shaw,[1] in his *War Dairy*, at page 48, says, "The Thirty-seventh was put on the skirmish line and we had a few shots at the Johnnies; we drove them about two miles, and as it was growing dark, we lay on picket at night."

General Wheaton says, in his report of the battle before Fort Stevens:

Upon arrival at Washington, July 11, at 12 M., I was directed by General Wright to move toward Chain Bridge. While marching up Pennsylvania Avenue was halted by Colonel Taylor, chief of staff, Department of Washington, and informed by him that the enemy was driving in our picket line and seriously threatening Fort Stevens on Seventh street, and received through him General Augur's instructions to march at once in that direction instead of Chain Bridge, as first ordered. I turned my brigade up Eleventh street, and while on the march to Fort Stevens was passed by General Wright, commanding the corps, and received his verbal instructions to mass near Crystal Spring, in the neighborhood of Fort Stevens, where we arrived at 4 o'clock in the P.M.

At 5 P.M., a portion of the Veteran Reserve Corps was driven in towards Fort Stevens by Early's forces and I was ordered to move 500 men of my brigade out to recover the line held in the afternoon. This was successfully accomplished before seven, and the enemy's advance was driven back to their main lines. The position was strengthened at dark and extended from a point opposite the centre of the line between Forts Stevens and Reno to the west and to a point opposite Fort Slocum to the east, a distance of

[1] Of Company D. In 1904 he printed 100 copies of his diary kept during the war.

about two miles. Skirmishing continued through the night and following day.

At 5 P.M. of the 12th, while in charge of the division, I was ordered to drive in the enemy's skirmish line, and occupy, if successful, two strong wooded hills in our front, the possession of which gave the enemy great advantage of position near our intrenched line. I ordered Colonel Bidwell, commanding the Third Brigade, to move his command outside the fort, and under cover of a ravine and woods, at trail arms, and every precaution taken to prevent the enemy discovering the movement, from two lines in the rear of my brigade (which was all deployed as skirmishers), and about 300 yards on the right of the Rockville pike, the position being covered by scrub timber and underbrush. Colonel Bidwell was then directed to select three of his very best regiments at an indicated point a few paces in rear of our skirmish line and fronting the strong wooded position held by the enemy. The attack was ordered to be made by the whole skirmish line of the First (my own) Brigade, and these three regiments from the Third Brigade were to assault and carry the strong position referred to, the remainder of the Third Brigade to be held ready to support the general movement. A preconcerted signal was made when these regiments were in position, at which time the batteries from Forts Stevens and Slocum opened fire upon certain indicated points strongly held by the enemy. As had been previously arranged, after the thirty-sixth shot from Fort Stevens had been fired, a signal was made from the parapet of that work and the commander of the skirmish line and three assaulting regiments dashed forward, surprising and hotly engaging the enemy, who was found to be much stronger than had been supposed. It became necessary to deploy immediately the three remaining regiments.

The enemy's stubborn resistance showed that a farther advance than already made would require more troops, and two regiments were sent for. Before their arrival, however (the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts and Second

Rhode Island), an aide-de-camp from General Wright directed me not to attempt more than the holding of the position I had gained, as the object of the attack had been accomplished, and the important points captured and held.

The last shot was fired about 10 o'clock and the remainder of the night was occupied in strengthening the position, burying the dead, and caring for the wounded.[1]

Wednesday, July 13th. During the night we were relieved on the front line by the Eleventh Vermont, and were sent to support the pickets on the extreme right. This morning the darkies cut down all the trees and orchards around us. Transportation was reduced so that each regiment in our brigade had one wagon. Ordered to march at 2 P.M. Moved through Tennallytown to Offutt's Cross-Roads,[2] a distance of fifteen miles—a hard march. Halted for the night at 7 P.M. Our horses did not come up, so all the officers of the regiment were afoot.[3]

Thursday, July 14th. Ordered to move at daylight. The Thirty-seventh was detailed as wagon guard, and therefore started late. Here we were equipped with Spencer rifles. It was esteemed a special compliment to the discipline and good reputation of the regiment.

[1] (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 275.) These excerpts from the report of General Wheaton (in temporary command of the Second Division, Sixth Corps, in absence of General Getty) are found in the card diary.

[2] See War Map 7 (1). For another good general map of this region, see War Map 27 (1).

[3] On the afternoon of the 13th, General Wright sent a despatch from Fort Reno to the Secretary of War: "The head of my column is passing this point, and will be pushed forward to the limits of the endurance of the men. . . . I can assure yourself and the President that there will be no delay on my part to head off the enemy, and that the men I have will do all that the number of men can do. They have been well tried and never found wanting." (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 265.)—C. S.

We waited until 2 P.M., and then started behind the teams, moved very slowly eight miles and stopped for the night near Seneca Mills. This evening the horses arrived in charge of hostlers. They were shipped in different boats. The slow progress made by the teams was due to the fact that the teamsters were green hands, and did not know how to handle the mules.

On the 14th, General Wright telegraphed General Halleck: "The march is rather a severe one, the men straggling badly. The teams are green, and the trains consequently move much less rapidly than the infantry."[1] Later in the day (6 P.M.) he reports from Poolesville:

> Most of the infantry of this corps and a part of the artillery have come up. The train is stretched along the road for a great distance and will not be all up by midnight, if so soon. . . . The enemy had, and kept, about twenty-four hours the start of us, which gave him full time to secure his crossing of the river. . . . My troops have marched over thirty miles in about twenty-four hours, over bad roads and under excessive heat.[2]

Friday, July 15th. Started at 11 to join the division at Poolesville, and arrived there at 3.30 P.M. Blackberries in abundance. Hanged a spy. I visited the town in the afternoon. The Rebs took fifteen thousand dollars' worth of goods from our store, also a very long train of cattle and carriages. Our baggage arrived.

Saturday, July 16th. Started at 5 to go by White's Ford[3] on the Potomac, and found a few of the enemy's cavalry guarding the opposite shore, but a few shells

[1] O. R., xxvii., pt. 1, p. 266.
[2] *Id.*, p. 267.
[3] See footnote at pages 47 and 51, and notes.

scattered them.[1] We waded across. The water was about three feet deep. We pushed on to Leesburg and formed a line of battle on a fine crest. The Rebs passed here this afternoon. General Hunter is coming up to join us. General Getty is in command of the corps.

Sunday, July 17th. We are encamped three miles beyond Leesburg at Clark's Gap.[2] Nothing doing to-day; we are resting. Ricketts's (Third) division[3] returned and joined the corps to-day. General Hunter is at Snicker's Gap, and General Howe is in command of Sigel's forces.[4] The Thirty-seventh attended religious services with the Fifteenth New Jersey. General Crook has followed Early across the Shenandoah, and General Wright has been ordered to be sure that Early is moving south, and return speedily with the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps to Petersburg.

A letter of this date says:

We forded the Potomac yesterday at White's Ford and came to Leesburg, following in the track of the Rebs most of the way. We are waiting for General Hunter to come[5] when I suppose we shall push on. Leesburg is a beautiful place. My eyes are a little better, but I do not dare to use them yet. Am under the doctor's care.

[1] Lieutenant Lamb of Battery C, First Rhode Island Light Artillery, reports that at White's Ford he went into position and fired twenty rounds at the enemy's cavalry. (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 281.)

[2] See *id.*, p. 271.

[3] It had been with General Lew Wallace and covered his retreat at the battle of Monocacy. (Bowen, p. 349.)

[4] General A. P. Howe was assigned to the command of the Military District of Harper's Ferry by the President on the 7th of July. O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 104.)

[5] A detachment of General Hunter's command, under General Crook, arrived at Purcellville, about six miles in advance of Clark's Gap, on the evening of the 16th, and on the evening of the 17th, General Wright reports: "The cavalry of General Crook's command, under General

Monday, July 18th. Received orders to march at 4 A.M. Our route was through Hamilton (where flags and handkerchiefs were waved as we passed), then on through Purcellville and Snickersville and through Snicker's Gap. The march was slow with frequent halts. General Hunter's command crossed the Shenandoah, had a skirmish with the Rebs and then retired. Macomber[1] stayed with me over night. Our brigade was detailed for picket duty.

Itinerary: "Moved again, crossing the mountains at Snicker's Gap; came up with the enemy on the bank of the Shenandoah; brigade on picket; so remained until the 20th."[2]

Tuesday, July 19th. On picket during the day. The boys tried their Spencer rifles. Several Rebs shot. Ordered to be ready to move at noon. Bowen (page 363) says: "There was a lively interchange of shots by the picket lines during the 19th."

Wednesday, July 20th. Moved the line forward into the woods at sunrise. Ordered to move at 10 A.M. The

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Duffie, more fortunate than the rest, struck the rear of the enemy on the Snickersville pike, capturing 117 mules and horses, 82 wagons, and 62 prisoners, besides killing and wounding a good many." (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 268.)—C. S.

[1] A classmate at Amherst.

[2] O. R., *id.*, p. 272. In the evening, General Wright ordered General Crook, commanding a division of General Hunter's command, who coming in from the North had struck the Snickersville pike six miles in advance of the Sixth Corps, to send out a cavalry force supported by infantry to harass the rear of the enemy's column. They found that the enemy had already crossed the Shenandoah and held the opposite bank. On the 18th, General Crook came up with the remainder of his command, and moving about a mile and a half to the right of Snicker's Ford, effected a crossing. He was hardly in position when he was made the object of several vigorous attacks by the enemy which were successfully repulsed. While this was going on, the Sixth Corps came up, but as it was rumored that Early's whole force was in their front, General

Thirty-seventh led the crossing and deployed as skirmishers at once, and found several wounded Federal soldiers at a house near by. Order to proceed to Berryville; Captain Young took three companies out to scout with him; sheep, pigs, poultry, colts, and horses abundant. We only advanced three miles from the river, when, owing to a thunderstorm, we were halted and General Wright changed his plans, and at 10 P.M. we started on our return march to Washington.

Itinerary: "With the rest of the corps it forded the Shenandoah and marched to within two miles of Berryville. That night commenced the return march to Washington; continued the march all night and the next day."[1]

Thursday, July 21st. We marched all night, recrossed the Shenandoah, passed through Snicker's Gap, down the eastern slope of Blue Ridge, breakfasted at or near Hamilton (seventeen miles from the start), and reached Leesburg at 2 P.M. Roads rough, people sullen and threatening as we marched through the town with flying colors. At 5 P.M. we halted for the night across Goose Creek, four miles beyond Leesburg. Mosby charged the rear of our column, and took some prisoners at Leesburg. The soldiers bathed and washed in Goose Creek. The water was clear and this the first oppor-

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Ricketts, then commanding the Sixth Corps, did not think it prudent to cross his men and General Crook withdrew, having lost something like four hundred men and inflicted a loss of over six hundred upon the enemy. (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, pp. 287, 290.)—C. S.

[1] O. R., *id.*, p. 272. On the 17th, General Halleck received the following despatch from General Grant, written the day before: "There can be no use in Wright following the enemy with the latter a day ahead, after he has passed entirely beyond (south of) all our communications. I want, if possible, to get the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps here, to use them here before the enemy can get Early back. . . . As soon as the Rebel

tunity to bathe they had had for a month. We heard that Ramseur's division attacked Averell north of Winchester and was defeated and driven to Strasburg.[1]

Friday, July 22d. Started at 8, and marched through Dranesville, where we halted for two hours at noon for refreshments. Crossed Difficult Creek in the afternoon, and were then fifteen miles from Washington. It was a hard march—Shaw says twenty miles.[2]

Saturday, July 23d. Marched at 3.30 A.M. Passed though Falls Church over Chain Bridge, and encamped a mile and a half beyond on the Tennallytown road in the rear of Fort Gaines just west of Washington.[3] Made requisition on the quartermaster to fill wants. Just at night Dr. Hitchcock and my brother Henry called and gave me a genuine surprise. Captain Lincoln was in town.

Bowen (page 365), says: "The next day was Sunday, the 24th, and after an inspection by Captain Tyler, officers and men devoted much of the time to perusing

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army is known to have passed Hunter's forces, recall Wright and send him back here with all despatch, and also send the Nineteenth Corps. If the enemy have any notion of returning, the fact will be developed before Wright can start back." (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 350.) This despatch was sent to General Wright.—C. S.

[1] See Bowen, p. 366. Averell had been trying to communicate with General Wright of the Sixth Corps, but found that he was already on his way back to Washington. Hearing that the enemy was within about three miles of Winchester, he determined to give battle and made a vigorous assault, drove the enemy from the field, and found that they had left four guns, seventy-three killed and one hundred and thirty wounded men on the field. Seventeen officers and two hundred and fifty men were captured. The next day he occupied Winchester where he was joined on the 22d by General Crook. (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 326).—C. S.

[2] *War Diary*, p. 50

[3] All these places appear clearly on War Map 7 (1). See Bowen, p. 365; O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 272 (itinerary).

the large mail which had been brought in and to writing letters." A generous rain fell, continuing through the night, and the wind blew strong, but they issued clothing in the rain as we were ordered to embark that night (for Petersburg), but it was postponed apparently on account of the storm.

CHAPTER XVI

FROM WASHINGTON TO HALLTOWN, TO FREDERICK AND BACK TO HALLTOWN

JULY 25 TO SEPTEMBER 18, 1864

[INTRODUCTION.—General Grant had need of the Sixth Corps and was anxious to keep the Army of the Potomac together, and he ordered it on arriving at Washington to proceed at once to Petersburg. The order was communicated to General Wright on the 24th, and preparations were being made for the immediate embarkation of his command. But before the day was over, General Grant sent a telegram to General Halleck: "You can retain Wright until I learn positively what has become of Early. I would prefer a complete smash-up of the enemy's roads about Gordonsville and Charlottesville to having the same force here. If Wright and Hunter can do the job, let them do it." [1]

The pursuit of Early was given up near Barryville, but the Rebel general was not aware of the fact until he arrived at Strasburg, some forty miles up the valley. He immediately turned back, drove General Crook out of Winchester, and pushed on to the Potomac. The Sixth Corps and the commands associated with it were ordered to Halltown, in the Valley of Shenandoah, about four miles west of Harper's Ferry. The position was an admirable one, but they had

[1] O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 426. The operations of General Sheridan in the Valley of the Shenandoah are given in War Maps 69: (1) represents his first advance and retreat, (2) his second advance after Grant's order, "Go in."—C. S.

hardly arrived there when General Halleck ordered them to Frederick, Maryland. The result was that they were put out of connection with the enemy and lost sight of the invading army altogether.

The section of country exposed to invasion was then divided into four military departments, each under a separate commander, and it was not easy for them to unite for joint action. General Grant now proposed to unite these departments under one commander, and nominated General Franklin for the position, and afterwards General Meade, but the authorities at Washington did not agree with him. Something must be done, and he telegraphed to General Halleck on the 1st of August that he had appointed General Sheridan to the temporary command in the field.[1]

On arriving in Washington, General Sheridan called with Secretary Stanton on the President, and Mr. Lincoln with his usual frankness told Sheridan of the Secretary's opposition to him, and that he himself shared the feelings of the Secretary. "But," said the President, "as General Grant has ploughed round the difficulties, I am satisfied."

We may now go back to Washington and resume the story.—C. S.]

MONDAY, July 25th. Rained and blew hard last night. We were ordered to embark for Petersburg at night, but it was postponed apparently on account of the storm. They issued clothing last night in the rain. I was suffering from malaria, and by the surgeon's directions I was moved down to the city. My brother Henry called a carriage and took me to a hotel. Professor Seelye called to see me.

Tuesday, July 26th. This morning Stebbins [a classmate] called to see me. Our corps moved at 11 to Rockville. I tried to find some conveyance with which to reach them, but was unable to do so.

[1] O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 558.

Wednesday, July 27th. I reported to the provost Marshal, and got transportation to Frederick. I had improved rapidly, but Henry persuaded me to wait and go with him.

In a letter from Binghamton, August 4th, his father wrote:

Henry wrote us, the day after your return to the army, a full and most entertaining account of his finding you, bringing you to Washington, nursing you and visiting with you for five days, till at length you set out refreshed and invigorated for the service. We little thought, when we planned for Henry's employment in the service of the Christian Commission, that almost his first service would be nursing and ministering to you.

Saw Captain Loomis and Lieutenant Chandley, and Stebbins called on me in the evening.

Thursday, July 28th. Stebbins and I circulated about the city; went to the Patent Office in the morning and to the Capitol in the afternoon.

In the meantime, the army had moved very rapidly. On Tuesday the regiment marched by way of Tennallytown and Rockville, and went into camp at 9 P.M. five miles beyond the latter place, some fifteen miles from Washington.[1] The next day they marched thirteen miles and halted early in the afternoon near Hyattstown. On Thursday the regiment started at 7, passed through Hyattstown and Urbana, halted at noon near Monocacy Creek, the scene of the recent battle between Wallace and Early, rested until 5 P.M., then forded the creek, and leaving Frederick on the right, halted at midnight near Jefferson.

[1] Bowen, p. 365.

After a brief rest, they started again, and marched to Knoxville on the Potomac, thence up the river, and across the pontoon bridge at Harper's Ferry, and four miles beyond to Halltown, where a halt in line of battle was made. The distance made was only fifteen miles, but it was said that thirty men died of sunstroke. Here General Crook joined his forces to those of General Wright.[1]

About 6 P.M. (the 28th,) I started with our sutler, May, to go to the regiment, and went within fifteen miles of Rockville. At midnight we halted and slept the rest of the night in a barn.

Friday, July 29th. We made an early start. Met some stragglers from the Sixth Corps not behaving creditably. We stopped within a mile of Urbana, put up at an old-fashioned country tavern, and I slept in the garret.

Saturday, July 30th. Breakfasted on bread and milk, and started at 6 A.M. The country was hilly. We crossed the Monocacy, and arrived at Frederick at 10 A.M.; moved on, met some of Mosby's men, and stopped at a farmhouse over night.

Sunday, July 31st. Started at 4.30 in pursuit of the regiment, and overtook them within a mile. The regiment started at 10 and marched until 2. The excessive heat prostrated many men. We rested until 4.30 and then resumed the march. Marched through Jefferson to the beat of the drum, then through Petersville,

[1] Bowen, p. 367; O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 272. General George Crook's command was known as the Army of West Virginia, and consisted of two divisions, although Sheridan says that there were not men enough to make more than one fair-sized division (*Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 472). It may be interesting to note that the Second Division was commanded by Colonel R. B. Hayes, afterwards President of the United States. —C. S.

and encamped in a beautiful grove within a mile of Frederick.[1]

Monday, August 1st. Rested all day. Heard the news from Petersburg and Malvern Hill. Chambersburg reported burned.[2] W. F. Merrill[3] called.

From camp near Frederick, Md., he wrote to his mother, August 1st:

I don't know as I told you in my last tnat my regiment went off and left me in Washington sick. They sent me down to the city to stay until the regiment passed through on its way to City Point, and then when they got orders to proceed up into Maryland, they did not have time to send for me, so I was left. I there had a nice visit with Hen, and

[1] The organization of the Department of West Virginia under General Hunter, July 31, 1864, given in O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 550, shows:

Sixth Corps, Maj.-Gen. Horatio G. Wright.
First Division, Brig.-Gen. David A. Russell.
Third Brigade, Col. Oliver Edwards.
37th Mass., Lieut.-Col. Geo. L. Montague.
6th Me. (battalion), Maj. Geo. Fuller.
23d Penn., Col. John F. Glenn.
49th Penn., Maj. Arnor W. Wakefield.
82d Penn., Lieut.-Col. John M. Wetherill.
119th Penn., Lieut.-Col. Gideon Clark.
5th Wis. (battalion), Capt. Chas. W. Kempf.

[2] The reference to Petersburg is to the explosion of the mine under the Rebel fortification known as Elliott's salient, on the morning of the 30th; that to Malvern Hill to the operations of the Second Corps under General Hancock north of the James, known to history as the Deep Bottom Campaign. It was undertaken to draw the Confederate troops from the defences of Petersburg to the defences of Richmond, and thus weaken the enemy's line at the time of the explosion of the mine. Early had sent forward his cavalry to demand a ransom of some of the towns on the border, and Chambersburg was the first to suffer. On the 30th, the demand was made for five hundred thousand dollars in currency or one hundred thousand in gold, on threat of immediately burning the town. As it was impossible to raise such a sum, the torch was applied, and three thousand people saw their homes reduced to ashes.—C. S.

[3] Of the Class of '63, Amherst College.

Steb, and Thursday afternoon I started with the sutler to find the regiment. They had marched very fast and had got to Harper's Ferry, some sixty miles, before we overtook them. They recrossed to this side of the river night before last, and I rejoined them yesterday morning.

A great many of the men have fallen sick and given out on these last two campaigns. They can't endure fatigue as they could at the beginning of the campaign, and they don't seem to rally as they did formerly. I pity them.

The troops have been marched on this trip without the slightest consideration. Day before yesterday some ninety boys in our regiment got heated and had spasms, and the trouble is that if they once melt they don't get over it all summer.[1] The marching was terribly hot yesterday and we made only ten miles. I went without the bandage on my eyes while in Washington, and for two or three days my eyes have been very sore to pay for it. I don't know but what I shall have to resign, if my eyes don't grow better. I found letters from Will, Father, and you when I arrived here. I should like to write as much in reply, but I can't do it this morning, and when I tell you what a delight your splendid long letters, so full of incidents and particulars, are to me, I hope you will feel that I appreciate them—although I would pay you in the other coin if I could. Love to Grandma and all the cousins—I must close.

The itinerary says that during the month of July

[1] The march from Washington to Halltown was exhausting in the extreme, and when they were ordered on the 30th to proceed to Frederick, Maryland, General Wright remonstrated and reported his corps "so much fatigued and scattered as to be unable to move this morning." (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 511.) A staff officer reported to General Halleck at midnight: "The men are very tired; some of the Sixth Corps stragglers were half-way between Frederick and Harper's Ferry this afternoon." (*Id.*, p. 512.) But the move was insisted upon and orders were issued to start the next morning at daylight. So exhausted were the men and so oppressive was the heat that in twenty-four hours one half of the Sixth Corps had fallen out by the wayside, many of them never to join the ranks again.—C. S.

the regiment marched about two hundred and thirty-nine miles.[1]

Tuesday, August 2d. Ordered to march, packed, started about 10 A.M., proceeded a few rods, and the orders were countermanded. Returned and issued rations and rested the remainder of the day. Large mail.

The following is a letter of this date to his father from camp near Frederick:

I believe about once in so often I sit down and write you a letter on business of some kind or other, and this morning I have come to the conclusion that I had better write you a letter of that kind. I want to write you about Colonel Edwards. He has been recommended for promotion by General Russell, who commands our division and is one of the ablest brigadiers in the army. He had also a very strong recommendation from General Getty, the commander of the Second Division. These recommendations are backed by Generals Wright and Meade, and approved by General Grant. These papers are all on file in the War Department, and it would seem as if such papers ought to be sufficient of themselves, and yet it is a fact that such is the character of our Government, that mere military papers, unless they are supported by political influence, are not worth a cent.

Now as to Colonel Edwards's merits, I don't think there is a brigade commander in the corps that has behaved more gallantly, or handled his men in better shape during this entire campaign. There are few commanders in the army that have more complete control, and can bring their troops up to that pitch of discipline which he effects in whatever he commands. I don't believe there is a regiment in the service that has shown more steadiness and better soldierly qualities than the Thirty-seventh.

[1] O. R., xxxvii., pt. 1, p. 272.

When old regiments like the Tenth Massachusetts and Second Rhode Island, considered among the best regiments in the service, were wavering and shaky, I never during the whole campaign have seen the slightest sign of a waver or of unsteadiness in the Thirty-seventh. They would go anywhere they were ordered without the slightest hesitation.

This perfection of discipline is due in a great measure to Colonel Edwards. Now such a commander, in these times when we have so many mean, cowardly, sneaking commanders, and when we so pre-eminently need good ones; when lack of discipline is the curse of our army, and we have so few that are capable of bringing troops to a proper degree of discipline; when such a man is so much needed, I say he ought to be rewarded. The good opinion of his corps and division commanders has placed him in command of one of the largest brigades in the army, and if General Sedgwick had lived, his best efforts would have been used in his favor. One of General Sedgwick's last acts was to transfer General Eustis to another division, so as to give Colonel Edwards command of a brigade, and he told Colonel E., after the battle in the Wilderness, that he should send forward his name for promotion at the first opportunity. His death prevented. Colonel Edwards is perfectly aware that he is not likely to receive his promotion unless he procures political influence, and yet such is his delicacy of feeling that he says that if his papers, backed by such military commanders, are not sufficient, they may fall through; and yet I know he would feel grateful if they were pushed through. Now I have taken it upon myself to write Mr. Washburn to secure if possible Mr. Sumner's influence in his behalf. I think they ought for the sake of old Massachusetts, for the sake of the cause and the country, to take an interest in the matter. I think all it would need would be for Mr. Sumner to interest himself a little in the case, and, with the aforesaid recommendations, it would go on of itself.

I have written warmly because I feel warmly, and I have

seen so many poor commanders promoted that, when I see a deserving one likely to get the go-by, I feel interested, as a patriot ought to be.

Wednesday, August 3d. Called at 4,and marched at 4.30, through Buckeyeville[1]; crossed the Monocacy and encamped. Had a bath, a swim, and a quiet rest. Rations of flour, meal, and soft bread.

Thursday, August 4th. National fast day.[2]

A letter to his parents from "Buckeyeville," of this date, says:

As we are resting to-day and I am likely to have a little more time than usual, I think I will commence a letter to you bright and early this morning and then I shall be sure to finish it during the day. I have just written a letter to Hen, so you see I am trying to keep my end of the rope straight with all the family. I wrote Will yesterday. After several ineffectual attempts to move from the camp where I last wrote you, and where report ordered us to all parts of the globe, we moved yesterday morning some five miles and encamped ourselves, it is said, for a stay of three or four days on the banks of the Monocacy, some five miles from Frederick City. So the boys are enjoying their stay and improving their time by bathing, fishing, and feeding on the products of Maryland soil. They keep the farmers' wives busy throughout this whole neighborhood baking the much coveted soft bread, which they buy at fabulous prices (75 cents or $1.00 a loaf). You would think soldiers' wages would hardly hold out at such rates. They, however, don't mind prices if they can only get the articles. Soldiers are

[1] Probably Buckeystown, five miles south of Frederick. See Bowen p. 369; War Map 27 (1).

[2] This day was the result of a concurrent resolution of Congress, approved July 7th, requesting the President to appoint "a day of humiliation and prayer," and cordially concurring, the President in a proclamation appointed the first Thursday in August "for a day of prayer."—C. S.

utterly regardless of expense when they see anything they want, especially after they have been campaigning awhile.

One of the best officers in our corps died very suddenly this morning, so suddenly that they supposed it must be heart disease. He was wounded in the Spottsylvania fight of May 12th by a ramrod passing through his arm after it had grazed his side. A small piece of the ramrod, it seems, remained in his side and it worked its way in until this morning it pierced his heart and killed him. He was all right yesterday. The post-mortem examination elicited these facts. He was Major Ellis of the Forty-ninth New York, and was the inspector-general of our division. The division was paraded in his honor as his remains were carried to the depot on their way home.

I received the last number of the *Round Table*. I am sorry that they had to give that enterprise up. I hope Charley[1] won't suffer from the failure. I have received one letter from you. Father at Hartford and Mother at Binghamton. Our mails are not very regular.

Friday, August 5th. General Grant visited General Hunter at headquarters. Hunter asked to be relieved, and Sheridan was assigned to the command of the Middle Military Department or Division.[2]

[1] Charles H. Sweetser, the publisher, a classmate.

[2] In the despatch notifying General Halleck of General Sheridan's appointment to temporary duty in the field, General Grant had added: "I want Sheridan put in command of all the troops in the field, with instructions to put himself south of the enemy and follow him to the death. Wherever the enemy goes, let our troops go also." (O. R., xxxvii., pt. 2, p. 558.) President Lincoln happened to see this and it pleased him. He telegraphed General Grant his approval but added: "This, I think, is exactly right as to how our forces should move, but please look over the despatches you may have received from here even since you made that order, and discover, if you can, that there is any idea in the head of any one here of 'putting our army south of the enemy,' or of 'following him to the death' in any direction. I repeat to you, it will neither be done nor attempted, unless you watch it every day and hour and force it." (*Id.*, p. 582.) On the receipt of this, General

On Friday, the Thirty-seventh rested all day. In the evening, received orders to move to Middletown. Assigned to guard the trains, which did not start until the next morning, so we slept all night. It rained.

Saturday, August 6th. Crossed the Monocacy River and camped on the farther side. It rained merrily until 8 o'clock. Moved through Jefferson and Whitmore. The sight of a jail called forth from one of the soldiers the remark, "Oh! for thirteen months within thy peaceful walls." A hard march. Halted at 5.30 for dinner and supper. Went through the culvert under the canal, onto the towpath, and marched two miles in four hours. Halted for the night at 11.30. Mother is anxious about my eyes and sends me a shade.

Sunday, August 7th. Up at 5 o'clock, moved forward and crossed the Potomac River, and halted after four miles at Halltown. The views from these hills are very beautiful. General Sheridan takes command of this military division. To-day at or near Moorfield, McCausland and his cavalry force, fresh from Chambers-

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Grant informed the President that he would start for Washington in two hours. He did not stop, however, at the capital, but went direct to Monocacy Junction, where he found General Hunter. He asked him where the enemy was, and he replied that he had been so embarrassed by orders from Washington that he had lost all track of the enemy. "Well," said General Grant, "I will find out where the enemy is," and he ordered steam got up, and trains made up, and gave directions to push for Halltown. The army went by rail on the night of the 5th, except those detailed to guard the trains. General Grant immediately telegraphed to General Halleck to send Sheridan to Harper's Ferry, and that he should call at Monocacy Junction. Sheridan came by special train, and on arrival at the Junction found General Grant at the station, had an hour's talk with him, received his orders, and went at once to Harper's Ferry. The position at Halltown was very embarrassing to General Early.—C. S.

burg, were attacked by Averell and badly defeated. Most of his command were captured.[1]

Monday, August 8th. No news this morning. Rested all day. Paymaster arrived to-night.

Letter to his classmate, M. F. Dickinson:

FOUR MILES BEYOND HARPER'S FERRY,
August 8, 1864.

DEAR DICK:

I think of you during this hot summer weather as indulging in the luxury of sea bathing, enjoying all the pleasures of the devotee of a fashionable watering-place at this most fashionable season. I should not object myself to a short sojourn at one of those Long Island beaches, but I have been wonderfully favored, when so many others have fared worse. So, my dear old fellow, don't believe me complaining. I am as happy as a lark. Ruf is back again and that is pleasant. I missed him very much during the summer months, and am proportionately glad to see him back. . . .

I suppose you will want to know what I am at. Well, I wish I could tell you. I suppose, however, we are watching Rebs. We started from Washington in a terrible flurry and marched at the rate of seventy miles in four days,

[1] Bowen, p. 367. General Sheridan reported to General Halleck that, on the morning of the 7th, "General Averell overtook the enemy's cavalry under General McCausland, at whose command Chambersburg was burnt; captured three battle-flags, four pieces of artillery, 420 prisoners, a large amount of small arms, and four hundred horses, and scattered the forces." (O. R., xliii., pt. 1, p. 726.)

As soon as General Early heard that the Union troops were being concentrated at Halltown, he withdrew his forces from the north side of the Potomac and took a position at Martinsburg, about twenty miles to the west and a little to the north of the Union position. A good macadamized road ran from Martinsburg up through the valley connecting the principal towns, which afforded him a ready means of guarding his communications.—C. S.

crossing the Potomac at Harper's Ferry, and proceeding a short distance into Virginia, until we heard that the Rebs were in Maryland. So back we hurried to the defence of Maryland. We stopped in the vicinity of Frederick several days, and last Saturday crossed the Potomac again, and have rested yesterday and to-day on Virginia soil, waiting, I suppose, for something to turn up. . . .

Yours affectionately,

MASE.

Tuesday, August 9th. The news of the capture of Mobile Bay by Farragut received. Torbert's cavalry arrived to-day.[1]

In a letter to his parents dated Camp near Harper's Ferry, August 9, 1864, he writes:

Here we are within seventy miles of Washington, and not a mail for a week. Somehow or other our regiment seems to have been counted out when they distributed the mails for this corps. . . .

After halting for several days on the banks of the Monocacy, and luxuriating in its cool waters, sudden orders came Friday night for us to pack up and proceed to Harper's Ferry. Our brigade was afterwards detailed as wagon guard, and so we did not start until Saturday morning, about 9 o'clock. However, we slept Friday night with our things all packed, supposing every moment we should be called on. Saturday night we slept on the tow-path of the canal, and Sunday morning marched over to our present camp, about four miles beyond Harper's Ferry. Since then we have been waiting, hardly knowing, I suppose, whether it was best to push into Virginia, or to run back to the defence of Maryland.

[1] The cavalry here referred to was a division of three brigades sent by General Grant from the Army of the Potomac, and Torbert was made the chief of cavalry of the Army of the Shenandoah (O. R., xliii. pt. 1, p. 501).—C. S.

Last night the paymaster came down upon us quite suddenly, but very agreeably. The boys have been sadly in want of money. It was more than five months since they had received any. The paymaster, however, did not do me a great deal of good, except the satisfaction I derived of seeing others happy. We have expected every hour to-day to be off from here, and still we are waiting. I should not complain much if they should leave us here a month. I think we could improve the time faithfully.

General Sheridan's appointment to the command of the troops in this Department, I think, gives great satisfaction. Although General Hunter may be a very good soldier, I don't believe he is a great commander. We have rumors that Lee is coming up this way with his whole army, and that all the Army of the Potomac, except the Second Corps, is coming around by way of Fortress Monroe and Washington to meet him. They seem to have made a most outrageous failure in their attempts upon Petersburg. I am not so much surprised at it, however, from what I saw. The condition of the army, with bad generalship, was enough to ruin the most feasible of undertakings. I don't believe Meade co-operates with Grant to the full extent of his power. No news of any consequence here. My love to all the friends.

Wednesday, August 10th. Aroused at 4.30 to start at 5.30. Passed through Charlestown, the county-seat made famous by the conviction and execution of John Brown in December, 1859. As the several drum corps entered the village, they each, regardless of the terrible heat, took up the air of "John Brown.[1]" Found the railroad torn up. Marched within twelve miles of Winchester. In a forest near Clifton, halted at 5 for the night. Much straggling. Many prostrated by the heat, which was at its worst as we were passing through

[1] Bowen, p. 370.

a cornfield. Fine shower to-night. Marched sixteen miles.

He wrote to his parents, August 12th, from Winchester:

I don't know as we shall have a chance to send a mail for a month to come, but as we are resting this afternoon, I think I will improve the opportunity to drop you a line. We left our camp near Harper's Ferry Wednesday, and have marched pretty hard since. We have suffered more because they have marched us in the heat of the day, or, rather, all day long, and the sun has been terribly scorching. Many a poor fellow has been struck down.

Last night we spent below here somewhere near Berryville. But this morning our corps pushed on to Front Royal, and we were detached to go back to Winchester and convoy a train on to the rest of the troops, so we marched only seven miles this morning and have been resting since.[1] When we shall go on, I do not learn; probably not before to-morrow, at any rate. I have not as yet been down into the town, only as we marched through it this morning. There were so many more anxious to go than I was that I waived my claims. It is said, however, by those who have been down, that they find a good many strong Union people, and that they have secreted some of our prisoners here and ministered to our wounded. The Rebs have been here and occupied the ground for the past week or two, so that the country is pretty well cleared of everything that is good. They tell us that there are some one hundred bushwhackers lurking around here ready to pounce upon all our stragglers.

Saturday morning. We are under marching orders this morning and expect every minute to go. Some men from Early's corps came in last night and say that his corps is at

[1] General Sheridan on the 12th ordered General Wright to send a brigade of the Sixth Corps via the Millwood pike to Winchester, to occupy the place until the arrival of the trains (O. R., xliii., pt. 1, p. 775). The Third Brigade, First Division, was selected.—C. S.

Strasburg, and that he intends to stop there and fight us. There was quite a fight day before yesterday between our cavalry and the Rebs. We attacked their rear guard as they were going out of the town. The wounded of both sides are here now.

Sunday morning. We made a fifteen mile march yesterday at 11 from Winchester to Cedar Creek, down beyond Middletown where we are now encamped. I have been sleeping all the morning until Henry came in with a big pile of letters and woke me up, and I went to reading and have been reading ever since. Your shade came among the rest, and I am sitting here writing to you with it on. It is just the thing. I enjoyed my stay at Winchester very much. I used to feast two or three times a day on bread and milk, and oh! how good it did taste! The weather has been awfully hot the past few days, and we have had to march through the heat of the whole of it. I am in good condition, however, and enjoying myself as much as a man can in this sort of life. I shall write Father and answer his questions soon. I don't dare to use my eyes much more to-day. I got the $10 Father sent me in Washington.

Saturday, August 13th. Moved out on the Strasburg road at 11. Moved in the rear of the trains at 2, through Kernstown, Newtown, Middletown, on to Cedar Creek. Miss Kitty Scan reclaimed her stolen horse and cows. Covered about nineteen miles.

On August 20th, Saturday, he wrote from Charlestown to his mother:

I thought I would muster up courage to drop you a line this afternoon, although I don't feel like the smartest man in the world. I have been suffering from a severe attack of fever and ague for the past three days, and to-day I am suffering from the crazing effects of whiskey and quinine

taken to counteract the fever. We left Middletown Tuesday night, and marched all night; rested near Winchester from 7 until 11, and then moved out five miles on the Berryville road.[1] That day I marched all day, but my legs would not have carried me an inch farther than they did.

That night the Rebs were coming down upon us about midnight and so they sent our regiment out on picket. The fact is, we have to do about all the picket duty and skirmish duty for the corps when there is any danger, because we are armed with Spencer rifles. We started the next morning and marched to Charlestown. The last two miles I had to get into an ambulance, the first time I ever got into an ambulance since I have been in the service. May it be the last! We have rested here since. Where we shall go next, I don't know. I was very badly off all day yesterday; had a severe shake and a violent fever. To-day I have kept them off with the doctor's aid, but I am a good deal like a rag.

I was appointed Judge Advocate of a court sitting in this division just before we left Middletown, and had tried one case. I accepted the position with a good deal of hesitation but I found I could use my eyes with a shade, and as I considered the experience valuable, and the additional pay something of a consideration, I decided to try it. But I am afraid now I shall have to give it up.

Sunday, August 21st. I am feeling a little better this

[1] Early, at this time, occupied a strong position at Fisher's Hill, and, on the 14th, Sheridan ordered the Sixth Corps to cross Cedar Creek and occupy the heights at Strasburg. But while this movement was in progress, he received a despatch from General Halleck, signed by General Grant: "Inform Sheridan that it is now certain two divisions of infantry have gone to Early, and some cavalry and twenty pieces of artillery. . . . He must be cautious and act now on the defensive until movements here force them to detach to send this way" (O. R., xliii., pt. 1, p. 43). To accomplish this, he immediately moved a strong force north of the James to menace Richmond. This despatch led General Sheridan to move back to Halltown.—C. S.

morning. About 8 o'clock the Rebs attacked our picket line. The Thirty-seventh was at once detailed for duty, and Companies A, F, and G were sent to the skirmish line, while the rest of the regiment was held in reserve. The surgeon sent an ambulance to take me to the hospital. Although I had eaten nothing for forty-eight hours, and was very weak, I insisted upon going with the regiment, and was detailed to command the skirmishers. I swallowed a tumbler of whiskey, and mounted my horse, and during the day lived on whiskey. I was on the skirmish line all day. We had twenty men killed and wounded out of about seventy-five on the skirmish line. Of these, three were from Company A, one each from Companies B, E, and I, six from Company F, and four from Company G. This is sometimes called the skirmish at Summit Point.[1]

Sheridan's retreat from Cedar Creek was accounted for. Early was reinforced by Kershaw's division from Longstreet's corps and two brigades of cavalry under Lee.

At nightfall, I was able to get some fresh milk and bread, and I ate heartily the first meal I had enjoyed for seventy-two hours. After dark we were withdrawn from the skirmish line, packed up and retreated to the vicinity of Harper's Ferry, where we occupied a strong defensive position between the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers.

Monday, August 22d. Last night moved back to

[1] In the affair here referred to, the Second Rhode Island and the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts were engaged, and General Sheridan reports to General Grant on the 22d: "The skirmishing was at one time yesterday rather sharp in front of the latter command [Sixth Corps], as the line was pressed forward and drove the enemy from a crest in our front which they occupied early in the day" (O. R., xliii., pt. 1, p. 880). See War Map 82 (6).—C. S.

Harper's Ferry, and resumed the lines which we occupied from August 7th to 10th, near Halltown. About 11 A.M., our division was ordered out on a reconnoissance. I was too much used up to go, and remained in camp at brigade headquarters. The division went out one and a half miles and halted, and there was no further movement. In the afternoon we had fine showers. I stayed over night at brigade headquarters.

Tuesday, August 23d. I rejoined the regiment this morning, and found them encamped in a beautiful grove on a hill, commanding a fine view of the Valley of the Shenandoah. The Twenty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers went home, their term of service having expired. Colonel Montague is in command of the brigade.

Thursday, August 25th. Made our ordnance returns for the second quarter of 1864. A reconnoissance made this afternoon showed the Rebs still in force in our front.

In a letter of this date to his classmate, M. F. Dickinson, he wrote from Camp near Halltown, Va.:

I have just eaten breakfast, if so I may dignify my frugal meal of hardtack and pork, and to settle it I know of no better recipe than a half hour's conversation with you. I wish I could do it in the good old-fashioned way, in a large arm chair slightly tipped back, with feet upon the stove or mantel. How we would sit and talk! But as I am allowed no such luxury, the best substitute I have is by letter.

We have had a pleasant little trip up the valley as far as Cedar Creek, and spent one day pleasantly at Winchester on the way down. The officers at brigade headquarters had a delightful time with the Winchester ladies. They found one or two very agreeable Union families, and all the officers

agreed that the Winchester young ladies were beautiful and charming. Last Sunday we had a brisk little fight at Charlestown. I was in the skirmish line with three companies from our regiment. I lost six men from about twenty-five that I took in from my company—Jo Taylor, Eben Wiley, John and Pat Briton among them. I have not a sergeant left in my company.

Last night I had a pleasant chat with Macomber. He is just as full of fun and humor as he always was, and has any quantity of yarns to tell about his numerous campaignings, and tells them in his own amusing way. Colonel Edwards has gone home to Springfield for a visit with his wife, and this leaves Lieutenant-Colonel Montague in command of the brigade. For although we have six regiments in our brigade, we have no officers higher than lieutenant-colonel. What is to be the end of all this marching and countermarching up and down the Shenandoah Valley, I cannot imagine. It is a question in my mind whether Washington or Richmond is really in the most danger. It is most vexatious to a soldier to be compelled to work so hard and see no results.

Ruf is doing very finely these days and does not seem to suffer much from his wounds. He is waiting very quietly for that commission to turn up. . . . Tell Goodell he owes me a letter. If he does not write me pretty soon, he will owe me another.

Oh! if this cruel war was over, how I would enjoy engaging in some civilized pursuit as you and Goodell are! I am sick to death of this business. It sometimes seems as if I could not possibly stay another year. Still I suppose I shall await the decisions of time. I must go to work on my company papers. I miss George Cook here. He always used to help me at such times.[1]

[1] The Thirty-seventh Regiment remained at Halltown until the 31st of August, when with the whole army it moved to Charlestown, where it remained until the 3d of September, when it marched to Clifton, where the position was intrenched, and the command remained until the 19th. There is little in the diary of interest, and no letters; and the happenings

In a letter to his brother Will, dated Clifton, September 16th, he wrote:

The War Department has just issued the order consolidating the Tenth and Seventh Massachusetts Detachments (the veterans of those regiments) with our regiment. So that will fill us up to the minimum number so that we can have second lieutenants in our regiment, and it will make room for ten or twelve promotions.

It will be rather good once more to have a full complement of officers. Now if they would only give us recruits enough to fill us up full, we should feel as if we amounted to something. There are so many away from these regiments at present that it will not in reality add much to our martial strength. Captain Lincoln has gone to Washington on business for the corps to see about the forwarding of recruits and convalescents to this department. He will be gone some four or five days, and have quite a pleasant little recreation, get paid, etc. We are living on the fat of the land these days. Foraging parties go out almost every day and bring in sheep, lambs, cows, pigs, fruit, and honey. This Shenandoah Valley is the richest country we ever campaigned in. A great many of the officers have provided themselves with cows, and keep them, and have fresh milk continually.

We don't have our baggage out here because we are liable to a fight at any time, and don't wish to be encumbered in that event. This is rather an inconvenience, as at this time there is a good deal of writing to be done.

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were of so little interest to Captain Tyler that some days he has made no entries in the diary. All that is recorded pertains to the ordinary routine of camp life, such as the making out of returns, picket duty, acting as officers of the day, the results of foraging parties, an account of rain and shine, receiving letters, and visits to and from friends.—C. S.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BATTLE OF WINCHESTER[1]

SEPTEMBER 19, 1864

[INTRODUCTION.—The campaign in the valley had not been satisfactory to the lieutenant-general, and had been the theme of a great deal of criticism in the Northern papers. The siege of Petersburg could not be pressed with the vigor the chief desired because of the absence in the valley of the troops detached from his army, and on the 17th he paid a visit to General Sheridan at Charlestown.

In the opinion of some military critics, General Early had up to this time conducted his affairs with consummate skill and judgment, but not without a boldness that sometimes approached rashness. Two or three times he had given Sheridan an opportunity to strike, rarely offered an opposing general. This led General Early to say in a report to the Confederate government that "the events of the last month had satisfied him that the commander opposed to him was without enterprise and possessed of an excessive caution which amounted to timidity." But while making a rather perilous move to prevent the repairing of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, he heard at the telegraph office at Martinsburg that Grant was at Charlestown with Sheridan, and he divined at once that something was likely to take place, and acted accordingly.

General Grant had warned General Sheridan almost every

[1] For maps of the battle of Winchester, see War Map 99 (1), and *Sheridan's Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 26, map.

day since he took command of the Department to be cautious, but he usually encouraged him to strike if it was practicable. He now listened to Sheridan's plans, kept his own carefully written order in his pocket, as he found that only two words of instructions were necessary: "Go in." The laconic order of the lieutenant-general was soon felt through the army, and we find in the diary indications of the coming struggle. General Grant had hardly left Charlestown when orders were issued by Sheridan for an advance.

The Union lines on the morning of the 18th extended from Summit Point on the right to White Post on the left, a distance of some fifteen miles, but the infantry was massed between Clifton and Berryville, and was about seven or eight miles from the battlefield of the next day.

The account of the battle of Winchester was written out quite fully by Colonel Tyler. It would be interesting to know what part Colonel Tyler took at the critical moment in this fight, but he has quoted Official Records to show the part—which was an important one—taken by his regiment, and, as will be seen hereafter, his own conduct was such as to attract the attention of his commanding officers.

The plan on which the battle of Winchester was fought was not the plan which General Sheridan had submitted to the lieutenant-general and which received his approval. This plan proposed to march the Union army south of Winchester, and put it across the enemy's line of retreat. But from the position of the Rebel army, as Sheridan saw it upon his return from Charlestown, he thought it best to fight the enemy in divisions. He thought he could by a rapid movement, crush Ramseur at Winchester before he could be reinforced by Gordon and Rodes, who were some distance to the north. There is a deep gorge or woody ravine about two miles long through which his army had to pass. Wilson, with the cavalry, dashed through it in the morning and carried the earthworks which had been erected to defend it. He should have been supported by the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps, but their progress was impeded in the gorge by

ambulance and ammunition wagons. The Sixth Corps was seven hours in making as many miles. The consequence was that Early was reinforced by the divisions of Gordon and Rodes before the battle began, and Sheridan had to fight the whole Rebel army occupying an advantageous position.[1]

It is noted in the diary that the wagon train came up and distributed rations, and was ordered to the rear; that marching orders were issued and countermanded at 5 o'clock.

From Clifton, on Sunday morning, September 18th, he wrote to his parents, and the letter is a striking illustration of how little, at the time, even an intelligent soldier knows of the movements of the army of which he is a member.—C. S.]

Letter of September 16th:

I have just an hour to write you a letter this morning during which I presume I shall have more than a dozen interruptions, as even on this Sunday morning they are issuing rations, making out requisitions, etc. General Grant was here this week, and it is predicted that he was here to some purpose. This morning the teams have come up with our valises and allowed us to put on a clean shirt, and are going right back, it is said. So things look a little as if we were on the eve of a move. Whether we chase Early or go to Petersburg is a question. For the past few days we have been busy with the consolidation of the detachments of the Seventh and Tenth with our regiment.

MONDAY, September 19th. We were up at 2 A.M., with orders to march at 3, and we started promptly, but progress was slow after we crossed the Opequon, owing to the narrow roads, which were badly blocked with troops and ammunition wagons. We reached the field

[1] *Sheridan's Memoirs*, vol. ii., pp. 9–31.

selected for the deployment of the troops, and immediately got into line. The Second and Third Divisions formed the front or first line of battle, and the First Division (ours) was in reserve or second line of battle, separated from them by the Berryville turnpike.[1] Our brigade was on the right of the turnpike.[2]

Cannonading was heard in the morning. But the fight commenced about noon, and the advance for a while was rapid. A gap developed between the Third Division and the Nineteenth Corps to our right, because the Third Division was ordered to maintain its connection on the left with the turnpike, and this obliged them to oblique to the left. The enemy attacked our line at this gap, and attempted to break through. General Russell ordered Upton into the breach, and led the brigade with Upton by his side. Russell had been previously shot through the body, but maintained his seat in his saddle until he was killed at the head of the charging column by the explosion of a shell. He was a gallant soldier and idolized by his followers.[3]

A portion of the Thirty-seventh supported the Fifth Maine battery, which was pouring canister into the advancing Rebel column. But when summoned by Russell, the Thirty-seventh advanced into the gap, and with their Spencer rifles rendered very efficient service in stopping the breach made by the Rebels at the point where the Sixth Corps and the Nineteenth Corps should have joined. Rebel prisoners captured in this advance

[1] See War Map 99 (1), showing the positions occupied at the battle of Winchester. For larger environs, see War Map 27 (1). The same positions are stated by Sheridan in vol. ii. of his *Memoirs*, at the top of page 20.

[2] This is explained in General Dalton's report, below. See p. 281.

[3] *Sheridan's Memoirs*, vol. ii., pp. 22–23.

asked what kind of a gun we had that could be loaded all night and fired all day. We blocked their advance and drove them back into their proper line. Upton was wounded in this charge, and Sheridan improved the opportunity to reform his lines. We rested two hours; meanwhile a division of cavalry arrived,[1] and the Eighth Corps was placed in position on the right of our line.

Sheridan started the cavalry and the Eighth Corps turned the Confederate left flank, and then rode with his staff at a full gallop, waving his sword, just in the rear of our advancing line of battle. It was a most inspiring scene. We were not used to seeing a commanding general on the front line of battle, and the exploding shells and the whistling bullets added excitement to the scene. We went forward at double quick, drove the Rebels out of their intrenchments, which, in our front, consisted of fences and thickets on the edge of a field, half wooded and half cleared, and in spots turned into rifle-pits. It was in this charge that Charley Bardwell was shot through the body.

It was now a lively chase. We were in hot pursuit and they were running to the rear as fast as they could, and in the distance we could see our cavalry gradually sweeping around their left flank. We drove them back on Winchester, and they escaped through the town and over the turnpike to the South. We captured some 2500 prisoners, crowding as many of the privates as we could into the court-house and yard and confining the officers in the jail yard.

[1] The cavalry here referred to were "Merritt's brigades led by Custer, Lovell, and Devin," who had just come in on the Martinsburg pike from the North. When they got the word to go, Sheridan says, they "literally rode down a battery of five guns and took about 1200 prisoners" (*Sheridan's Memoirs*, vol. ii., pp. 11, 24, and 26).—C. S.

The Thirty-seventh went into the fight with 276 muskets, and lost twelve enlisted men killed, and seven officers and seventy-two men wounded—a total of ninety-one.[1] It was our largest percentage loss in any single battle. I was wounded by a piece of shell which just grazed my chin and cut it to the bone, passing very close to the jugular vein.

The ladies of Winchester turned out in large numbers, and brought food and dainties to the prisoners. Colonel Edwards was appointed commander of the post, with headquarters at Winchester. His brigade was detailed for garrison duty. Lieutenant-Colonel Montague was made provost marshal, and the Thirty-seventh Regiment became the provost guard. The Thirty-seventh was lodged in the city and the other regiments of the brigade were encamped around the city, on different sides. The Thirty-seventh really did police duty; the other regiments performed picket and guard duty. I took possession of one of the offices in the building opposite the court-house. It was a desolate, windowless, dirty place, but we fixed up some benches along the walls of our room, and spread our blankets upon them, and by day they were lounges, and at night they were beds.

Col. Edwards reports:

This brigade [Third Brigade, First Division, Sixth Corps] with the rest of the corps left its camp near Clifton, Va., on the morning of the 19th instant. Shortly after 3 o'clock reached the Opequon and crossed not long after sunrise. The enemy were met in force about two miles southwest of that stream. The brigade was placed in position on the left of the turnpike, in columns of battalions at full distance, at right angles with the line of battle, with instructions to

[1] O. R., xliii., pt. 1, p. 112.

move by the right flank and keep 300 yards in rear of the line and move forward when the first line advanced. In this position the command suffered severely from a hot and continuous fire from the enemy's artillery.

At 11.40 the column commenced to move forward, coming into line of battle immediately after passing through the first belt of woods. Thus the brigade continued its forward movement under quite a severe fire until ordered to move double quick to the right of the road, as the enemy had broken through the line of the Nineteenth Corps. Seeing the enemy had got to the rear and right of us, I ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Montague, commanding the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, to attack them at that point. At the same time the enemy came out of the woods in front of us in two lines of battle and charged. I advanced my brigade with bayonets at the charge, forcing the fugitives in front to lie down as we passed over them. We opened fire at 150 yards range and drove the enemy back handsomely. At the same time, Lieutenant-Colonel Montague drove the enemy back from the rear and right, taking 150 prisoners and inflicting severe loss upon the enemy, though I regret to say the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts lost over one third its number. Nothing but their Spencer rifles enabled them to defeat more than five times their number.

Capt. H. H. Young, brigade inspector, and Lieutenant Colt, seeing the battery on the left of the road in danger of capture, placed the Forty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers in support, who handsomely repulsed the enemy and flanked that part of their line that was in front of the balance of the brigade on the right of the turnpike. General Russell was killed at this time charging with my brigade.

As soon as the lines were reformed on our right, an advance was ordered. We moved steadily forward, driving the enemy before us. General Upton was wounded, and turned over the command of the division to me. Again the advance was ordered and the division charged across the

open country in magnificent line and order up to the heights of Winchester. The enemy broke before us and were routed. The Forty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers saved Cowan's battery, and the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers saved Stevens's. The officers of these two artillery organizations acknowledged that these regiments succeeded in preventing the enemy from capturing their pieces. The Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers also captured the battle-flag of the Second Virginia Infantry, and the Forty-ninth Pennsylvania the headquarters flag of General Fitzhugh Lee.[1]

General Upton, commanding Second Brigade, First Division, in his report says: "On the left of the brigade, the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers rendered invaluable service in supporting Stevens's battery."[2]

The report says General Upton was called to the command of the brigade at 12:30. This must have been the hour of General Russell's death.

Report of Henry R. Dalton, assistant adjutant-general, First Division, Sixth Corps, says:

On Monday, the 19th instant, the division broke camp at 2 A.M.; moved across country to the Berryville pike; from thence via the pike to within three miles of Winchester, when it went in position in support of the other divisions of the corps—the First Brigade, Lieut.-Col. E. L. Campbell, Fifteenth New Jersey Volunteers, commanding, supporting the Third Division on the left of the pike; the Third Brigade, Col. O. Edwards, Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, commanding, on the left of the pike, supporting the Second Division; the Second Brigade [General Upton] moving by the flank up the pike.

The enemy, having pushed back the Second Division of

[1] O. R., xliii., pt. 1, pp. 184–5. [2] Id., p. 173.

the Nineteenth Corps and a portion of the Third Division of this corps, moved down toward the pike, delivering a severe fire of musketry from the woods and cornfields on the right. The Third Brigade (Edwards's) was now rapidly moved by the flank to the right of the pike, then forward, with the First Brigade, under a heavy fire, to a crest commanding the woods and field through which the enemy moved. This advance was very much assisted by the First New York Battery (Cowan's), commanded by Lieutenant Johnson, which did splendid execution, and was fought with gallantry under a very annoying musketry fire.

At this time, General Upton moved his brigade into line to the right of the pike at an oblique angle to it, thence forward into the woods, delivering heavy volleys into masses of the enemy, who were coming up. This fresh fire from the Second Brigade soon caused the enemy to fall back, so that the whole line moved forward to a position which was easily held till the latter part of the afternoon, though occasionally sharp musketry fire was interchanged.

While personally superintending the advance of the First and Third Brigades to the crest previously referred to, and which he considered of the utmost importance, General Russell was killed by a piece of shell which passed through his heart. He had just before received a bullet wound in the left breast, but had not mentioned this to any of his staff, continuing to urge forward his troops. In this advance, Capt. A. M. Tyler, commissary of musters of the division, was severely wounded in the hand while leading the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers belonging to the Third Brigade.

On the death of General Russell, Brig.-Gen. Emory Upton assumed command by order of Maj.-Gen. H. G. Wright, but there being necessarily some delay in giving information of General Russell's death to General Wright, and transmitting the order of General Wright to General Upton to take command, Col. O. Edwards superintended the movements of his own and the First Brigade, carrying out

the design of General Russell, which he did, fighting his troops with great gallantry and coolness.

The formation of the division, after the engagement of the morning, being from left to right, Third Brigade, First Brigade, Second Brigade—the left resting near the house on or near the pike—the right brigade crotcheted to the rear and one regiment on its right at right angles, making a connection with the general line of the Nineteenth Corps, Brigadier-General Grover's division, though in advance of it some 150 yards.

At 4 P.M. the enemy, having been routed on the right by the charge of General Crook's troops, moved down in some confusion along the front of the Nineteenth Corps and that of the Second Brigade. This being observed, General Upton ordered the right regiment, mentioned above, to move forward "double quick" to a crest some 200 yards in advance, which it did under an annoying musketry fire; from this crest a well-directed fire on the enemy caused him to continue his flight in still greater confusion than before. The remainder of this brigade was then swung round and forwarded, the left being the pivot, and a connection was formed with General Crook's command, Col. George D. Wells's brigade, when a general advance was made from crest to crest, the enemy giving way without serious opposition.

During this general advance, Brigadier-General Upton was wounded by a shell while urging forward the troops. The command then devolved upon Col. O. Edwards, Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, under whose superintendence the division made its final forward movement, carrying the last crest contested for by the enemy.[1]

[1] O. R., xliii., pt. 1, pp. 163–4. See War Map 69 (2), and *Sheridan's Personal Memoirs*, ii., 26, map.

CHAPTER XVIII

AT WINCHESTER

FROM SEPTEMBER 20 TO DECEMBER 12, 1864

[INTRODUCTION.—The night after the battle of Winchester, General Early retired in hot haste to a strong position at Fisher's Hill. At five o'clock the next morning, General Sheridan moved rapidly up the Valley pike, and at one o'clock the Sixth Corps were crossing Cedar Creek, and the cavalry, under General Merritt, were occupying the heights of Strasburg, about two miles north of the enemy's position.

The Union general occupied the 21st in examining the enemy's position, and the next day, the 22d, dealt him a very damaging blow, inflicting upon him heavy losses in killed, wounded, and captured. The Third Brigade, Second Division, Sixth Corps, did not take part in the battle of Fisher's Hill, as they had been detailed for guard duty at Winchester, where the Thirty-seventh remained until the 12th of December. From the nature of the case, the situation was not always an easy or a pleasant one.

Unfortunately, the notes in the diary give very little idea of what was going on at Winchester for a few days after the battle. They would probably have brought to the mind of the writer many things that would be exceedingly interesting, for it was a time of intense activity. While General Sheridan was fighting the battle of Fisher's Hill, Colonel Edwards was clearing up the battlefield at Winchester,

picking up the scattered arms and various implements of war, burying the dead, bringing in the wounded of both sides, providing for their wants, and sending off prisoners to Harper's Ferry.

Colonel Edwards reports: "All wagons that could be seized have been impressed into the service for the purpose of collecting and bringing in the wounded. . . . I have had all the wagons belonging to my brigade unloaded, and they are now arduously at work on this duty. One hundred wagons in all . . . reported to the medical director by my order at daylight this morning."[1]

The medical director on the 24th reports: "I sent yesterday 700 wounded to Sandy Hook hospital. There are still 3800 here, including 700 Rebels. I learn that more wounded men are on their way to this place from the front. I must send to Harper's Ferry the slightly wounded as rapidly as possible.[2]

On the 28th, Col. Edwards reports: "The medical director has about 2500 wounded here; they will not bear removal for six weeks, that is, with the exception of about 500.[3]—C. S.]

TUESDAY, September 20th. Received more prisoners, making 1500. Sent the officers to the Winchester jail. Had no rations for them.[4] The citizens are very attentive. The air is full of rumors. Our brigade occupies the city and the rest of the corps have gone on with Sheridan in pursuit of the enemy. I called on Major Davis and Captain Drew in the prison yard and took them some whiskey. I was busy all day making

[1] O. R., xliii., pt. 2, p. 146. [2] *Id.*, p. 163.

[3] *Id.*, 2, p. 201.

[4] On the 20th, General Sheridan telegraphed General Stevenson at Harper's Ferry: "Send in addition to the eight days' rations ordered last night for the troops, 20,000 rations to Winchester for our prisoners and wounded" (*Id.*, 2, p. 125).—C. S.

out lists of the prisoners, and watching them to see that none escaped.

Wednesday, September 21st. Colonel Edwards returned from the front where he temporarily commanded the division. He sets to work to reorganize things with a strong hand. The hospitals here, especially the Rebel hospital, are in very bad condition. General Neill returned to-day.[1]

Thursday, September 22d. Started the prisoners this morning to the rear, and we went to work to police the camp and the city as thoroughly as we could. Our baggage arrived to-day. At Fisher's Hill, Sheridan drove Early's forces from their intrenched camp by a flank movement, executed by the Eighth Corps (General Crook's),[2] and captured 1000 prisoners and twenty guns. Great rejoicing in the North over our victory of the 19th. One hundred guns fired in each of the military departments.

On the 23d of September, 1864, Professor William S. Tyler wrote from Amherst to his son at Winchester something of the anxieties of the families and friends at home:

I had hoped to learn whether you are yet in the land of the living or have fallen among the hundreds of dead and thousands of wounded in the late glorious battle—before writing you again. But we hear nothing from you since

[1] It will be remembered that Captain Tyler was at one time a member of General Neill's official family. On the 20th, the order sending General Neill to report for duty to General Wright was "rescinded and he was ordered to proceed to Martinsburg and assume command of the post there" (O. R., xliii., pt. 2, p. 119).—C. S.

[2] Crook's corps was joined by the Sixth, which seems to have had an equal share in the victory. See Sheridan's reports, O. R., *id.*, pp. 152, 162, and *Memoirs*, pp. 37, 38. This explains the reference to the Sixth in the letter of the 23d, at page 288 below.—C. S.

the battle—your last date received being Sunday, the 18th, and we get as yet very meagre reports of the casualties. From the correspondent of the *Herald* of to-day, however, I glean enough to show that the Thirty-seventh has not escaped without serious losses—the names of Captain Loomis, Captain Pierce, Lieutenant Harris, Lieutenant Cozens, Lieutenant Bardwell, the last to our great sorrow reported "dangerous." We derive some encouragement from the fact that your name does not appear in a list which gives so many casualties in your regiment. . . . Dr. Hackett, in a letter just received, adds a postscript, saying: "I often think of your son in the army, and trust his life has been preserved, and that he will return to you in safety." A recent letter from Grandpa Tyler and one from Grandma Whiting both express a similar interest in you, and everybody I meet down town inquires if I have heard from you since the battle.

By the way, the battle is knocking down gold and goods, etc., faster than even the fall of Atlanta. Gold is reported this noon at 213, and goods and produce are falling quite as rapidly, as I fondly hope not to rise again.

A letter to his brother dated September 23, 1864, refers to the battle of Winchester:

I have just written Hen and I will try and drop you a line, although, as the mail goes very soon, I don't know as I shall be able to get it off this morning. We have had a big fight and whipped old Early soundly. The Thirty-seventh Regiment did splendidly. They lost one third of their men, but took more prisoners than they lost men. We got the battle-flag of the famous Stonewall Regiment, the Second Virginia. It was stamped with the names of thirteen battles that they had figured prominently in. I received a slight scratch under my chin, but it did not take me from duty a moment. Charley Bardwell did splendidly, and was very severely wounded through the body just at the close of the

action. He is comfortable now, but we watch him very carefully and with great anxiety.

I have a Colt's revolver, navy size, which I picked up on the field. I think I will send it to you at the first opportunity, or I may keep it through the campaign, and then let you have it to keep until I get through the war at least. It will amuse you in some of your leisure time.

This Winchester is a beautiful place, or rather, has been. I think it must have had six or eight thousand inhabitants, and is very compactly built. Now the stores and public buildings are all deserted, and there are very few male inhabitants that are not over sixty years of age. They have some of the prettiest girls here I ever saw, and any quantity of them.

This morning has just brought the news that Sheridan has driven the enemy from Fisher's Hill, and has pursued them beyond Woodstock. The Sixth Corps flanked them and took sixteen guns and 1000 prisoners.[1] I did not tell you why I am here in Winchester. Colonel Edwards is military governor of the place and our brigade occupies the town. Colonel Montague is provost marshal and our regiment is provost guard. Until yesterday morning we had some 1500 Reb prisoners under our charge. We occupy some of the offices that surround the court-house and have very pleasant quarters.

I picked up a little darkey that was taken prisoner in this fight and shall keep him as my servant. I think he will make a first-rate one. He has been a slave, and was with his master who was a captain in a Georgia regiment.

You had better believe everybody is in high glee. The good news cheers them up, and then the thought that we should gain such victories in the place where we have so often suffered defeat makes success doubly welcome. I have picked up a horse, saddle, and bridle since I have been in this march. I don't know as I shall be able to keep him, but I shall try for a while at least. It is too late for this

[1] See p. 286.

morning's mail, so I shall not send this until to-morrow. If I have time I shall add a little more.

On a fragment of a letter without date (probably written the day after the above letter as he refers to the letter), he wrote:

We are living on the fat of the land these days. We keep a cow and a horse, so that I can have bread and milk for supper every night, and milk in my coffee and tea. Then I can indulge in the pleasure of an occasional ride on horseback. In my peregrinations to hunt up the Rebs, I have found it very pleasant to ride sometimes. I also have a darkey who is quite a specimen. I got him out of this lot of Reb prisoners. He is rather slow, but I think will learn to move quickly in time, and he seems to be as faithful as the day is long. I think I shall like him as soon as we become acquainted. . . .

Did you know that it is very probable that the Thirty-seventh sharpshooters shot General Rodes in the battle of Monday? As near as we can find out from Rebel statements, he was engaged in putting the battery that we silenced into position, when he was struck by the ball of a sharpshooter. At the time he is said to have been killed, our regiment was almost the only one that was doing any firing. It was about 12.30 when we advanced alone and drove the Rebs before us, and this battery was brought up to oppose us. That was the time that I got scratched.

Sunday, September 25th. I attended the Episcopal church this morning. It is the only one of the local churches that was open.

Monday, September 26th. Devoted the day to taking lists of all the attendants on the Rebel wounded in the city of Winchester.

Wednesday, September 28th. Very busy day in preparing muster rolls and working on lists covering

Rebel hospitals. Had a pleasant talk with Dr. Love, in charge of Rebel hospitals, this afternoon. In front of Petersburg, two divisions from each of the Fifth and Ninth Corps extended our lines about two miles to the left and held the ground, afterwards fortified by Fort Fisher.

Thursday, September 29th. Paymaster arrived last evening and paid us this morning. Charley Bardwell comfortable.

WINCHESTER, Oct. 2, 1864.

MY DEAR PARENTS:

I have just arisen from the breakfast table, and the news has come that Grant has thrown his army between Petersburg and Richmond, capturing several guns and some prisoners. What is the exact amount of damage done to Rebel lines we are as yet unable to learn, as the newspapers that were to bring us the account of these movements were captured by Mosby. But what we do hear is so cheering that we are all jubilant this morning, and feel that something is being done towards plucking out the heart of the Rebel Confederacy, viz., Richmond. May the Ruler of all things grant that this day our armies may rest with the satisfaction of having done that work. For I believe Richmond has already fallen. I supposed last summer that Grant intended to cut the road between Petersburg and Richmond, and then take his choice whether he would take Petersburg or Richmond. But he decided differently and I presume wisely at the time. I hear that Grant has received since the second battle on the Weldon Railroad, 70,000 reinforcements. In that case he has something of an army.

I have been busy all the week paroling Rebs in the hospitals in this place. It is something of a job, and I am not quite through with it. There are some 800 wounded Rebs and about 200 attendants taking care of them. I have charge of this department of the business in the provost

marshal's office, and if any of these come to the office and wish anything, they are referred to me.

Captain Lincoln, you know, has been up to Washington, and brought down some 1300 recruits, convalescents, etc., to our corps. He took them up to the front at Harrisonburg, and delivered them over to the proper authorities, and returned Friday afternoon. He reports that they were almost out of rations when he left, and the trains could not be up for three days; so they cannot support our army at that distance from its base a great while at this season.[1] They have got to do one of two things, change on to the Culpeper line and open that railroad again, or starve it through on what rations they can get from our trains and the country, until they have accomplished their errand up the valley. For undoubtedly we have an important part to play in the drama that is enacting before Richmond.

I have President Hopkins's baccalaureate sermon preached at Williamstown this last Commencement, and have promised myself the treat of reading it to-day. Our chaplain, I understand, has returned, although I have not seen him. So maybe we shall have service to-day for ourselves.

I have just returned from our service. Mr. Lane arrived last night and was rejoiced to find Charley Bardwell very comfortable. This afternoon he gave us the best sermon that I have heard for a year, from the first verse of the twelfth chapter of Romans. His remarks were practical, pointed, and well suited to the occasion. We have plenty of room here, so Mr. Morse has taken as his chapel a nice room a short distance from here on the opposite side of the street. This afternoon two ladies, delegates from the Christian Commission, were present to aid the singing. One, Mrs. Harris, claims to have been the first field agent of the Christian Commission. The other, a Mrs. Beck, is a

[1] The diary remarks Harrisonburg is eighty miles from the base of the army at Martinsburg which makes it difficult to provision and supply the army.

good deal younger than Mrs. Harris, and has been a shorter time at the work, I think. She tells me that she spent some time at Mrs. Tuckerman's this summer, and was there during Commencement. So I had quite a pleasant chat with her about Amherst.

These two ladies are very devoted in their attentions to the soldiers, and spend most of their time in the hospital.

This morning I attended the Episcopal church again, as it is the only church in the place that is open. After the service they administered the sacrament. The ceremony was beautiful and the occasion a very solemn one. It was the first time I ever saw the sacrament as administered by the Episcopalians. . . .

Ever your affec. son,

MASE.

The same day, he wrote to his classmate, M. F. Dickinson:

It is some days since I received your last. To me they have been days of busy occupation. In fact, ever since the battle we have been in one continuous bustle of excitement. We have had some 3000 prisoners to guard at one time or another, and now that we have only the care of the city upon our shoulders, it gives us no slight labor. My special charge has been the enrolling and paroling of the attendants upon the Reb hospitals in the city. There are some 200 attendants upon 800 wounded here in the city. . . . Ruf has been up to the front with some 1300 convalescents and has just got back last Friday afternoon. He is tough and hearty. So yesterday afternoon, while it was raining hard, I sat down and beat him a rubber of cribbage. I am reading *John Halifax* greatly to my delight.

Wednesday, October 5th. General Sheridan began his retreat down the valley. The cavalry were ordered

to devastate the valley—mills, storehouses, barns, and crops were to be burned.[1]

Thursday, October 6th. Charley Bardwell died this morning.

[1] During the months of October, November, and December, the record in the diary is meagre, and the letters seem to have taken its place in the mind of the writer. Indeed, most that is recorded in the diary is reported in the letters. The position of the soldier doing guard duty in so important a place as Winchester, situated in a very disloyal section of the country, was not a bed of roses. Mosby and Gilmor were ever on the alert, with every advantage of information and knowledge of the country in their favor, and made the post one of constant anxiety and wearing vigilance.

The Union army had occupied Harrisonburg on the 30th of September but the cavalry had been pushed on to Staunton and Charlottesville, and the valley was now virtually clear of Rebel troops. Bushwhackers were, however, abundant, and made it necessary for every train of two hundred wagons to have an escort of a thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry. The trains often contained five hundred wagons, and deliberate murders of Union soldiers were not infrequent. It was the wish of General Grant that Sheridan should proceed to Gordonsville and Charlottesville, and destroy the railroad connections there, and if practicable threaten Richmond. But Sheridan had fears about the movement, and they were so strong that the lieutenant-general adopted his suggestion and consented to the return of the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps to Petersburg. There was, however, one order of the lieutenant-general that Sheridan carried out in the letter and the spirit. Here is the order together with his own enforcing it, to which reference is made in the diary:

"In pushing up the Shenandoah Valley, as it is expected you will have to go first or last, it is desirable that nothing should be left to invite the enemy to return. Take all provisions, forage, and stock wanted for the use of your command. Such as cannot be consumed, destroy. It is not desirable that buildings should be destroyed—they should, rather, be protected; but the people should be informed that, so long as an army can subsist among them, recurrences of these raids must be expected, and we are determined to stop them at all hazards. Bear in mind the object is to drive the enemy south; and to do this you want to keep him always in sight. Be guided in your course by the course he takes. Make your own arrangements for supplies of all kinds, giving regular vouchers for such as may be taken from loyal citizens."

General Sheridan's order to his chief of cavalry was: "No houses will

WINCHESTER, Oct. 9, 1864.

MY DEAR PARENTS:

While waiting for the time for church, I may as well begin my usual Sunday letter. We are having very cold weather these days. In fact, it takes considerable management to keep warm either night or day. This morning the ground is frozen and the wind blows a bleak November chill, while the clouds are so thick that the sun is hardly able to peer through at all. We have a good fireplace in our room, but the scarcity of wood in this neighborhood renders it rather difficult to keep the fireplace warm, to say nothing of the room. The lights were pretty much all smashed out of the windows when we came here, but by picking up new sashes around the town and making them double, we have managed to stop a little of the circulation of the air, and now for almost the first time in two years, while sleeping in a building, I have taken a real old-fashioned cold, and am suffering from sore throat and snuffles in my nose. Still, I am better this morning than I was yesterday. Yesterday I sat in the house pretty much all day and read Hayne's and Webster's great speeches. I think they made me appreciate more fully the greatness of the contest in which we are engaged, the worth of union and the principles for which we are contending. . . .

I have had a very pleasant Sabbath to-day. In fact, the privilege that we have here of spending a Christian Sabbath in something like a Christian neighborhood is more like home than any military experience we have previously had. The chaplain has a regimental service in the afternoon and in the morning I usually attend church in the city, and the rest of the day the quiet of my own room affords me a place for reading, meditation, and prayer. The quiet

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be burned, and officers in charge of this delicate but necessary duty must inform the people that the object is to make this valley untenable for the raiding parties of the Rebel army" (*Sheridan's Memoirs*, vol. i., pp. 484 and 485).—C. S.

is as marked here Sunday as in our own New England village. But the churches are too many of them occupied as hospitals for all to attend public worship, and I don't know but that the clergymen have all gone south. At any rate, there is no business transacted and every facility is afforded them for worship within the power of the post commandant. The rest of the week, Winchester is a very lively business place.

Monday morning. Last night quite a train came in from the front bringing a great many refugees; and to see the babies, little girls and boys and half-clad mothers shivering this bleak, cold night, in their shells of buildings, is a sight pitiable to behold. Sheridan has retreated to Fisher's Hill and burnt everything from there to Staunton. We hardly know what to make of the movements. I suppose, however, he knows what he is about, and very likely is obeying orders. It was so cold last night I could not sleep well. I wish I had my overcoat.

Ever your son,

MASON.

Sunday, October 9th. We hear this evening that Custer and Merritt have defeated Rosser at Tom's Brook and chased him twenty miles. Tom's Brook is crossed by the Valley pike some four or five miles south of Fisher's Hill.[1]

[1] General Early was reinforced on the 5th by a brigade of cavalry under the dashing General Rosser. He was hailed as "the saviour of the valley," and his men "were bedecked with laurel branches." He caused the Union army a good deal of trouble and became very bold in his operations. On the 8th, General Sheridan decided to "have Rosser chastised," and halting his infantry, gave orders to General Torbert, his chief of cavalry, to attack the enemy the next morning, "and whip him or get whipped yourself" (*Sheridan's Memoirs*, ii., 56). General Torbert at once made up his command, which consisted of the First and Third Divisions of cavalry, Generals Custer and Merritt, and early the next morning was in front of the enemy who numbered between four and five thousand. General Sheridan made his headquarters that morning

Monday, October 10th. Sheridan retreated to Cedar Creek. The Eighth Corps encamped on the east of the turnpike, the Nineteenth on the west of it. The Sixth Corps marched to the Shenandoah opposite Ashby's Gap under orders to return to the Army of the Potomac at Petersburg.

Thursday, October 13th. Early having been reinforced by Kershaw's division (recalled from its return to General Lee), suddenly appeared at Fisher's Hill, and repulsed an attack made by a portion of the Eighth Corps (Thoburn's division). The Thirty-fourth Massachusetts suffered a heavy loss in this fight. The Sixth Corps, after having made a day's march toward Front Royal, were ordered back to Cedar Creek, and on arriving went into camp in the rear of the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps.[1]

Tuesday, October 18th. General Sheridan[2] arrived at our headquarters late in the afternoon and spent the night.[3] I was present and heard him talk a while.

Wednesday, October 19th. I was awakened long before dawn by the sound of distant cannonading, and after listening for a long time concluded it was serious, and arose and got something to eat and went to head-

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on Round Top, a hill that overlooked the battlefield just to the south. The battle was a peculiar one. It was fought with sabres and was stubbornly contested. General Sheridan's account of what he saw, in a despatch to General Grant, is vivid. "It was a square cavalry fight, in which the enemy was routed beyond my power to describe. He lost everything carried on wheels except one piece of artillery, and when last seen it was passing over Rude's Hill near New Market, on the keen run, twenty-six miles from the battlefield, to which point the pursuit was kept up" (O. R., xliii., pt. 2, p. 339.)—C. S.

[1] See *Sheridan's Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 61.

[2] He has been on a short visit to Washington.

[3] See *Sheridan's Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 67.

quarters. Found General Sheridan just starting with his staff and escort for the front.

Colonel Edwards appointed me officer of the day. The stragglers of the Nineteenth Army Corps were coming in in large numbers, and I was directed to halt all soldiers on our picket line and form them into companies and battalions. Our brigade was assembled on the south side of the city, and formed in line to be a nucleus of a line of battle in case the army retreated to Winchester, and the picket line was strengthened by large additional details. We stopped a large number of stragglers, and by noon they had ceased. Some teams were parked near the city, but not very many. At evening we received the news that the rout had been turned into a signal victory, and that Sheridan had recaptured all the prisoners and guns taken by Early in the morning, and added to them twenty-four guns and 1200 Rebels. Custer and the cavalry had made the most of the captures. Great enthusiasm prevailed in our camp upon the receipt of this intelligence.[1]

Saturday, October 22d. A despatch of this date, from the headquarters of the Sixth Corps, reads:

[1] The story of the battle of Cedar Creek to which reference is here made, and Sheridan's account of his famous ride from Winchester, "twenty miles away," are given in his *Memoirs*, vol. ii., commencing at page 66, and continuing through the chapter. General Early, having gathered all the strength he could through the return to his army of convalescents and other absentees, had moved quietly from Fisher's Hill in the night of the 18th and early on the morning of the 19th, to surprise Sheridan's army on the north bank of Cedar Creek before Sheridan could get back from Washington. The surprise was so complete a success that the Union army was thrown into confusion, and driven from its camps in disorder back in the direction of Winchester. Sheridan's arrival among the retreating soldiers was made the signal for a return to the front, which culminated in the victory mentioned in the diary.

Lieut.-Col. C. Kingsbury, Jr.,
Asst. Adjt.-Gen., Headquarters Middle Military Division.

Colonel:

I have the honor to request that if not incompatible with the interests of the service, the Third Brigade, First Division, Col. O. Edwards commanding, now at Winchester, be returned to duty with the corps. The division to which the brigade belongs numbers without it only 1550 enlisted men for duty with only one field officer. The brigade is an excellent one, and might, it is suggested, be replaced by troops who having seen less service would not be so valuable in the field, while they could perform the duty at Winchester as well.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
H. G. Wright,
Major-General, Commanding.[1]

Winchester, Oct. 23, 1864.

My dear Parents:

Yesterday, I was on as officer of the day, and kept quite busy attending to all the business of the city. Last night they brought in nearly a thousand of our wounded in army wagons. It was terribly cold, and the poor fellows, besides all the tortures of their wounds, had to suffer the awful effects of the cold. The Sanitary and Christian Commissions turned out and supplied them with hot soup, coffee, tea, and hot whiskey punch, and what blankets they could find. Still they had to lie in the wagons over night and were carried on to-day. Luckily the weather moderated towards morning or many of them would have frozen to death. I am afraid as it was many of them got their death chill.

The order has just been issued by General Sheridan for

[1] O. R., xliii., pt. 2, p. 445.

the arrest of all male citizens in the Valley, between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, who are capable of bearing arms.[1] It will cause such a commotion in this town as has not been seen since the war commenced. The papers came this morning with very incomplete accounts of Sheridan's latest great victory.[2]

The Rebs curse the Sixth Corps, and the Unionists are extravagant in their eulogies of it. We enjoy both the curses and the eulogies. One is as great praise as the other. General Sheridan, I understand, credits the victory and the decisive charge to the Second Division of our corps.[3] We are proud of the fact. We used to belong to the Second. The Third Division, as usual, broke. They originally belonged to the old Third Corps; we don't think much of them. The Eighth and Nineteenth Corps have been rather inclined to think that they could whip anything that ever saw light, but they don't say much now. There is very little doubt that the First and Second Divisions behaved splendidly during the whole fight.

I have been to church this morning—the old-school Presbyterian church. They opened for the first time to-day. The minister is quite an able man, I should think, and a very good man. His sermon this morning was on glorifying the Lord, and was one of condolence to the people at this particular time. He spoke of Northern fanatics and Southern demagogues subverting the Constitution. Their people had suffered enormously, and still he glorified the Lord for it all. He quoted Scriptures very freely and was exceedingly earnest in his prayers for peace, but said nothing about the restoration of the Union. Still I liked him for his plain speaking, and his out-and-out frankness bore a very strong contrast to the milk-and-water secessionism of the Episcopalian minister. Yet he made me a little mad

[1] The diary says they were ordered to be sent to Fort McHenry.

[2] Cedar Creek.

[3] This statement in a letter written four days after the battle is confirmed by Sheridan's maturer view in his *Memoirs*, vol. ii., at page 82.

once or twice, and I felt like appointing the service this afternoon and preaching myself. . . .

Two or three weeks ago when we had some hundreds of prisoners in the court-house I was very much interested to see them one Sunday night separate off in squads and hold religious services. They sang and prayed with all the fervor of the Southern heart. I thought then that they were more devout than we were, for all seemed to unite in presence, if not in taking part.

Your affectionate son, MASE.

In a letter to a brother, dated October 25, 1864, from Winchester, he wrote:

We have decided to-day to go out to board. My present chum (Capt. Robinson) and I thought we would try to live in a civilized way for a little while. So we have engaged a boarding place and to-day move in. If possible we shall try to get a few nights' rest in a civilized bed. We have been sleeping on boards and under very few blankets ever since we have been here, and find the weather mighty cold. I have been roaming around very busily this evening. Several of the officers have been busily engaged arresting disloyal citizens. One of my friends on the corps staff was wounded in the last fight and is lying here at Colonel Edwards's headquarters. One or two of his ribs are broken, and there is great danger of his not recovering. I have been up to see him and find him quite feeble. He can read, however, and so I have just sent him up my last *Harper*. As I write there is quite a cannonading going on in our rear towards Martinsburg. There is quite a train expected in to-day, and I am afraid the guerillas have attacked it. I hope it will get through safe and bring my coat. I should not, however, care to have my coat on board if the train is destroyed by guerillas. . . .

I have got to go on as officer of the day to-morrow and a pleasant job I shall have of it, attending to the widows and

orphans, calling for their husbands and fathers that we have shut up. They will be sent off soon, however, so that it won't last long.

October 26th, he wrote to his mother:

We have been having quite a scare over a rumor that announced an immediate march to the front for us. It spread like wildfire yesterday afternoon. Colonel Montague got hold of it and sent up to brigade headquarters and found that it all originated with the fact that General Wheaton, who now commands our division, had made an application to General Sheridan for our return. We would thank General Wheaton to keep his applications at home, if that is the tenor of them.

I have just got nicely situated in a very pleasant boarding place here in town. Mrs. O'Bannon is a lady whose acquaintance I made while paroling Rebs. She is a widow, and her husband was an officer in the United States employ. She has lived many years in the best society of Washington, and is an exceedingly cultivated lady. She has two nieces living with her. Captain Hopkins, Captain Robinson, and myself are together there.[1]

[1] Mrs. O'Bannon lived in Kent Street. It was at her house that the notorious Major Harry Gilmor had found shelter after he was wounded at Bunker Hill on the 3d of September, and where he remained until noon of the memorable 19th of September. His hand in burning Chambersburg, in wrecking trains and robbing the passengers, made him very anxious not to fall into the hands of General Sheridan, whose guns were now thundering in his ears. "The three weeks of physical suffering," he wrote afterwards, "I spent in that house were among the happiest in my life" (*Four Years in the Saddle*, p. 271). It is not often that a lady has the grace to extend her courtesies in such opposite directions. The other ladies referred to were Miss Fanny Dickens and Miss Kate Reilly.

At the house of Mrs. O'Bannon, Captain Tyler found an exceedingly pleasant home during his stay at Winchester, and although he saw them but once afterwards, friendly relations with the family were kept up for many years.—C. S.

WINCHESTER, Oct. 27 [1864].

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I have been very busy for twenty four hours as officer of the day. Yesterday and day before we arrested nearly one hundred citizens of disloyal tendencies, and at present have them confined in the building opposite to our quarters.

Of course it has kicked up a terrible muss, and I, as officer of the day, was beset with the entreaties of men and women of the place wishing to see their husbands and fathers. Some old men sixty or seventy years of age and much broken down with the infirmities of old age are there. It is my private opinion that the conscription has been *too* relentless and I am afraid it will overshoot the mark. Still, as I am not consulted, I have no right to express an opinion. After yesterday's experiences, I am in that uneasy, nervous state which is natural after a day of excitement. Therefore you must not expect a very heavy letter this morning. I am not in the condition to write one.

Yesterday afternoon they had a flag presentation in the Forty-ninth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers. They are the best regiment from Pennsylvania I have ever seen and re-enlisted almost to a man. The colors were sent on yesterday from the State Department. In the absence of the governor, Colonel Edwards presented them to the regiment with a neat little speech.

In a day or two now we shall be hard at work making out papers for this month. Time really passes so rapidly here that I hardly appreciate that we have been here nearly six weeks. Yet such is the fact. Yesterday afternoon the rumor reached us that we were to be relieved and that the Maryland Brigade was to relieve us. I tell you if there was n't a stir among the boys! The rumor spread in less than ten minutes all over the regiment. It turned out that General Wheaton had made application for us to be sent

back to the division. I hope that General Sheridan will decide differently.

Your brother,
MASE.

On October 29th, he wrote to his mother:

The regiment is every man of it on duty. Fifty men have gone off to hunt for Mosby. Then General Sheridan is here taking a survey of the ground and to meet some engineers from Washington. A guard of seventy-five men from our regiment has been detailed to take care of him. This, with our regular duty, takes every man we have. General Sheridan visited all the hospitals here in the city yesterday, and spoke a cheering word to all the wounded. If they don't remember him it will be because they are very forgetful. We think there is nothing like General Sheridan. It has been decided, I understand, to retain our regiment here in the city as long as Colonel Edwards stays. How long that will be remains to be seen.

I have a fine account of General Russell in the Boston *Advertiser*, in which it speaks of our regiment doing very well in the battle of Winchester on the 19th of September. Our regiment was a great favorite of General Russell, and he always relied on us for his tough jobs. Next to General Sedgwick, he was the greatest loss our corps has sustained.

HDQRS. MIDDLE MILITARY DIVISION,
October 27, 1864.

Special Orders No. 67.

. . . . . .

13. Colonel Heine, commanding Provisional Division, will proceed to Winchester to-morrow morning at 6 o'clock, with his division, and report to Colonel Edwards, commanding that post, for duty. On Colonel Heine, arriving at Winchester, Colonel Edwards will place en route for this point his own brigade, and order it to report to commanding

officer Sixth Corps.[1] By command of Major-General Sheridan.

C. Kingsbury, Jr.,
Assistant Adjutant-General.[2]

Provost Marshal's Office,
Winchester, Va., Nov. 5, 1864.

My dear Parents:

I have been so busy the past week that I have had no time to write letters. Colonel Montague has gone north,

[1] Organization of troops in the Middle Military Division, commanded by Maj.-Gen. Philip H. Sheridan, October 31, 1864:

Sixth Corps, Maj.-Gen. Horatio Wright.
First Div., Brig.-Gen. Frank Wheaton.
Third Brig., Col. Thomas S. Allen.
37th Mass. (detached at Winchester), Capt. Hugh Donnelly.

O. R., xliii., pt. 2, p. 511.

[2] *Id.*, p. 475. Colonel Tyler, at this point in his card diary, has copied the report of Colonel Edwards, commanding the Third Brigade, First Division, Sixth Corps, under date October 27, 1864:

"On the 9th day of August, my brigade, with the rest of the corps, commenced the movement up the Valley. On the 12th, the brigade was detached from the rest of the division and ordered to garrison Winchester. Relieved by General Kenly's troops on the 13th; marched as guard to the trains as far as Middletown, rejoining the division at Cedar Creek, where remained until night of the 16th, when the command marched, reaching the Opequon the following afternoon; left on the morning of the 18th and marched to the vicinity of Charlestown. On the 21st the enemy attacked our picket line, the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts and Second Rhode Island Volunteers on the line. That night moved back as far as Halltown. On the afternoon of the 22d, ordered to support of the army of West Virginia; remained in this position until the 28th, when the command moved as far as Charlestown, taking up its old position. On the 3d of September moved from camp near Charlestown, Va., and marched as far as Clifton, where the position was intrenched and the command remained in it until the morning of the 19th, when, with the rest of the corps, it moved out to the Opequon, crossed that stream shortly after daylight, and participated in the engagement of that day, losing sixteen commissioned officers and 228 enlisted men. On the morning of the 20th the command was assigned to duty at Winchester, where it has remained as a garrison to the post up to the present time" (O. R., xliii., pt. 1, p. 186.)—C. S.

and Colonel Edwards put me into the office of the provost marshal until his return. We have heard this morning that Colonel Montague has met with an accident and would not return for some time at least. This, I suppose, will detain us here for some time to come. I had hoped to be home by Thanksgiving, but I am afraid it will be later than that now before I get home. Still, as long as I am busy and well occupied, I don't care.

Yesterday we had quite an excitement here; General Sheridan came down from headquarters and stopped with Colonel Edwards over dinner. He was on his way to inspect the railroad between here and Harper's Ferry. They ate some cheese while at Colonel Edwards's, and after they had got fairly out in the country, the general and several of his staff were taken deadly sick. Captain Moore, indeed, for a while was thought to be dying, but he finally rallied, and is to-day very comfortable. I understand Colonel Edwards and his staff had eaten of the cheese the night before, and been affected a good deal in the same way, but not so severely. You can imagine that an affair of this kind would produce some excitement, because we did not know but that there might be foul play, and General Sheridan's life endangered. As it was, they had to send out an ambulance and bring the general and one or two of his staff in.

Colonel Edwards thinks there is a prospect that we may stay here during the winter. They are making preparations apparently to rebuild the railroad to Harper's Ferry, and this would look very much as if they intended to hold this place during the winter, and in that case they may keep us here. Still we don't build any hopes on the prospect. We are happy in the idea that the campaign is so near the end.

I see a rumor in the paper of to-day that General Rosecrans has been ordered to the command of the Army of the Potomac. I should be perfectly satisfied if this were the case. For although I like General Meade and believe in his

ability, I don't think he supports Grant as he ought to. I hardly know what to think of the campaign, whether it is finished or not, for this reason: they have commenced giving leaves of absence and furloughs in this department, and it hardly seems as if they would do that if they expected more fighting immediately, and since Grant's last move proved nothing, I don't know but that they intend to wait for the spring campaign before they attempt to do much. The Army of the Potomac must suffer terribly from want of proper organization.

Sunday morning. . . . Our regiment, the most of it, went out last night in search of Mosby. A report was received here that he was lying in wait for General Sheridan some eight miles from here; so Colonel Edwards ordered out the regiment in pursuit. But for infantry to catch Mosby mounted is not easy. They were gone all night and came back this morning without any booty, having had nothing but their tramp. It was exceedingly cold last night and those out had to suffer. The regiment is worked very hard here. Colonel Edwards seems to think that he can rely on nothing else but the Thirty-seventh, so they have to do all his jobs, and since they have been here, the men have been on duty two nights out of three a good deal of the time. This is too much for flesh and blood to endure.

I have been at church this morning and heard our chaplain preach. He has taken the Episcopal church, and is going to occupy it hereafter for his service. He had a very respectable audience of soldiers and one or two ladies. His sermon was upon "Faith that worketh," a very good practical discourse upon the Christian faith, and what it should bring out in our lives.

Ever your son,

MASE.

WINCHESTER, Nov. 9, 1864.

MY DEAR FATHER:

I guess you will think it about time that you heard

from me again. The fact is, that I hardly have ten minutes in the day that I can call my own, and if I sit down for that length of time, something is sure to come to disturb my repose. This is not the kind of a life to write letters you know. I, however, enjoy my occupation much. It gives me something to think about and to do, and the responsibility is just enough to be agreeable. The work is not hard, it is simply incessant, calling for this or that by somebody all day long. Yesterday was election day with you at the North. I should like to have been with you and seen the fun. Here the day passed unnoticed, except that we were all somewhat weary.

Monday night some one brought word that Fitzhugh Lee with some four thousand cavalry was over to the west of Winchester, either threatening a raid upon the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, or else an attack upon Winchester. Colonel Edwards acted with his usual determination, and before nine o'clock had us all up in line of battle, and there the regiment stayed waiting in a drizzling rain until morning. I went out with the regiment, but when I saw there was not much chance of a fight, I concluded to return and get a little rest by virtue of my provost-marshal's berth, and so about 12 I returned to my room, and slept the rest of the night. The regiment did not come in until yesterday at noon.

I see considerable of Colonel Edwards these days, and he often wishes to be remembered to you. The colonel is expecting his wife on here shortly. I shall be mighty glad to see her genial face here. Colonel Edwards occupied a beautiful house for his headquarters, and has two large rooms for his own accommodation, except when General Sheridan is here, when he occupies one of them. Rumor says to-day that the army of General Sheridan has fallen back to Kernstown, and is there intending to intrench and go into rather more permanent quarters. Some reports say that they have been expecting every day to have a fight up at the front. They are said to have been reinforced

strongly, and Longstreet is said to be in command. This rumor is old, and not to be relied upon.[1]

Ever your son,
MASON.

WINCHESTER, Nov. 13, 1864.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

Sunday has come around again with its seasonable rest and quiet. To be sure there is now and then an order, but it is not an incessant drive as during the rest of the week.

This morning an underground mail communication with the Rebs has been discovered, and I have just received orders to ferret it out. Yesterday there was quite sharp skirmishing with the Reb cavalry all day. This morning we hear that we took three guns and something like two hundred prisoners. The prisoners report that Early crossed Cedar Creek with his whole force and retired again last night. It was lucky for him that General Sheridan did not know it, he would have pounced upon him again.

As I get tired of writing so much the earlier part of the day, I find that I need recreation much in the afternoon, and, as at present I am allowed a horse, I usually try the efficacy of a ride. There are a great many pleasant views around Winchester, and I am fast making myself acquainted with them. There is fine hunting (quail and partridges) by going just outside the picket line, and several of our officers

[1] About the 9th of November, General Sheridan took up his headquarters at Kernstown, and began the withdrawal of his forces to that point, and finally decided that a defensive line should be held to enable him to send troops to Petersburg. But hardly had he withdrawn from the upper valley, when Early, with what he could collect of his shattered army, began to advance and make a show of assuming the offensive. Sheridan launched at him a force of cavalry under Merritt, Custer, and Powell, which resulted in the usual misfortune to the Rebel cavalry, and Sheridan reported to General Grant: "There has been none of the enemy's forces within reach in my front for a distance of forty miles since the last advance of Early and his hasty retreat." (O. R., xliii., pt. 2, p. 649.)—C. S.

are fond of indulging their sportsman tastes in this pleasant vale. I have not been out myself as yet, but have intended to go almost any day.

The army has moved back to within five miles of Winchester and they are kept on the *qui vive* pretty much all the time because their position, which can be flanked on either side, is rather a precarious one. . . .

This morning I attended church at the old-school Presbyterian church and heard their pastor, Mr. Graham, preach. The sermon was on the depth of Christ's love—a plain, simple discourse. The congregation was mostly composed of women, and the most of them, mourning for their friends, were dressed in black. The marks of war are indelibly written in the appearance of every family in this town.

Col. Edwards is expecting his wife by every train, and as there is a train coming up to-night, we shall probably have a mail. We are happy over the election news. Massachusetts has done herself credit by her enormous majority.

With much love,

Ever your son,

MASON.

WINCHESTER, Nov. 16, 1864.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

. . . . To-day is a beautiful day, and the sun is as bright and warm as an October sun usually is. The most of the officers have taken horses and gone out to ride and to enjoy themselves in such glorious air, but I don't feel very much like riding this P.M., and consequently am communing with you. A foraging party went out from here this morning, escorted by Seventeenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, and four of them have just been brought in wounded. The rest were all killed or captured by Mosby. The affair has produced quite an excitement here in the street, and knots of men are talking it over on the corners

now.[1] Colonel Edwards went out hunting this morning but came rushing back as soon as he heard the firing. He, however, succeeded in getting some four quails and two rabbits. Mrs. Edwards does not come yet. They are expecting her to-day, I understand. General Sheridan was down from the front yesterday afternoon, and stayed some five hours with Colonel Edwards.

I am invited to sup out to-night with one of the promi-

[1] These occurrences appear to have been frequent.

"HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES,
"WINCHESTER, VA., November 7, 1864.

"LIEUT.-COL. C. KINGSBURY, Jr.,
"*Assistant Adjutant-General*, Middle Military Division.
"COLONEL:

"I have the honor to state that G. H. Soule, Company G, Fifth Michigan Cavalry, this day entered our lines from the direction of Berryville, and reported as follows: He was taken prisoner by soldiers of Mosby's command on the macadamized road near Newtown, and by them taken to a camp on the Winchester and Berryville turnpike. There he was placed with a squad of Federal prisoners numbering about twenty-two, and with them compelled to draw lots for the purpose of determining upon a certain number who should be hung. Of the twenty-three prisoners, seven were to be executed in retaliation for a like number of Mosby's command who were hung by General Custer. Of the seven upon whom the lot fell, three were hung, two shot, and two escaped. The wounded men—one of them escaped alive by feigning death—are being cared for by Union families in the vicinity of the camp. The men who escaped have reported at this post. The accompanying note was found by a citizen who cut down and buried the bodies, pinned to the clothing of one of the men who were hanged. Captain Brewster, commissary of subsistence of General Custer's command, was among the parties captured. The name of one of the men hanged was ascertained to be George L. Prouty. He was a member of Company L, Fifth Michigan Cavalry.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
"O. EDWARDS,
"*Colonel, Commanding Post.*

"(Inclosure)

"These men have been hung in retaliation for an equal number of Colonel Mosby's men hung by order of General Custer, at Front Royal. Measure for measure." (O. R., vol., xliii., pt. 2, p. 566.) See another like instance, O. R., vol., xliii., pt. 1, p. 186.

nent Union men here. He has been accustomed to flee whenever the Rebs occupied the town, and his descriptions of his attempts and successes in running the Reb pickets are interesting. Your fears of my being poisoned were most amusing to me. The people with whom we are boarding are among the most aristocratic and cultured people of the town. They are cousins of the Blairs of Cabinet fame, and, before the war, were very well off in this world's goods. They had according to their say some forty or fifty servants (negroes). It has surprised me to see how easily they adapted themselves to their new position. They never allow themselves to be idle two consecutive minutes, but their fingers are flying from early morning to late night. They cook, wait on the table and attend to our comfort, with all the grace of old housekeepers. Almost the only recreation I have seen them take is in the evening, sometimes, when we ask them to sing for us, and they sit down at the piano and delight us with the sweetest music.

I shall be mighty busy to-morrow examining into some pilfering that has been carried on rather extensively here in town of late. The provost marshal has to be court, judge, and jury all at once. Good-night for to-night.

Your affec. son,

MASE.

Saturday, November 19th. Captain Lincoln left on fifteen days' leave, to be present at M. F. Dickinson's wedding. I could not get away at this time.

November 20th, he wrote to his father from Winchester:

We are expecting to have the railroad finished through to this place within a few days now. They have sent so large a force down from here to guard it that it leaves a very small force within the town. Still, the army is so near that nothing very disastrous could happen. It is now said that the principal depot is not to be at Winchester, but at Summit Point, some ten miles from here. In that event, Win-

chester will be held as a kind of an outpost, much as Culpeper was for the army last year. Then the question arises whether we shall stay here. I think we shall as long as Colonel Edwards stays, at least, and Colonel Edwards seems to be high in favor with General Sheridan, and if his wife comes on, General Sheridan will hardly be so ungallant as to send the Colonel off before he has had a nice visit with her. Rumor has had it for several days that our corps was to be ordered off on some special service, where no one knew. Our corps is very small, and hardly amounts to enough to do anything by itself. It can muster only about 8000 men now, and they probably have had 40,000 all told during this summer—four fifths gone.

We are hoping that General Sherman is going to do something towards helping the downfall of Richmond. It does seem as if it was absolutely necessary that we should have that place before the army goes into winter quarters. Where Sherman will turn up I have not the slightest idea. Still, I should not wonder if Mobile attracted his attention. It is quite important that they should have the control of that river.

Wednesday, November 23d. *In a letter to his brother Henry, he says:*

I have been out and made a call upon one of the ladies of Winchester, who is a native of Frederick City, Maryland, and is well acquainted with the friends of Mr. Schroeder there, the Goldboroughs, and also Mrs. Albert of Baltimore. So I had a pleasant chat with her about them. This lady, although she pretends to be Southern in her feeling and sympathies, still has so many ties with the North that she is very friendly to our officers. There are some people here who boast that they have never spoken to a Yankee soldier or officer since the war commenced, unless they were obliged to, and they won't acknowledge that there are any gentlemen in the Yankee army. They boast that they hope to

say at the end of the war that they have uniformly been governed by this principle. They won't be introduced to a Yankee officer. If one happens to come into a room where they are calling or visiting, they will get up and leave. If any of their friends are guilty of any communication with Yankees, they discard them at once, and pronounce them traitors to the Rebel cause. Such is the intolerant spirit that prevails among many of the high-toned Southern chivalry.

Thursday, November 24th. Thanksgiving Day! Our dinner was a success. Everything was nicely cooked. The ladies were very agreeable and did all in their power to make our feast conform to the requirements of a New England Thanksgiving dinner. (M. F. D., Jr., was married to-day, and R. P. L. was best man.)

WINCHESTER, VA.,
Dec. 1, [1864.]

MY DEAR BROTHER HEN:

Our corps is under marching orders this morning, and is said to be on its way to Petersburg. In fact, the First Division has just passed through the city. The Second Division, I understand, will go to-morrow, and the Third Division will go by land with the trains to Alexandria. Of course they are somewhat disgusted at going back to Petersburg. They would rather go almost anywhere else. Their associations with Petersburg are not of the pleasantest. I suppose our regiment will be relieved from this post in a day or two and go with them. We are hardly willing to leave the old Sixth Corps even for the privilege of staying here all winter. We are bound to them by too many ties.

We are all hoping (almost against hope, however) that the corps is going somewhere else than Petersburg, perhaps to Wilmington, Savannah, or Charlestown. The first was said to have been our destination, when we started before, and were ordered back because of Early's attack. Some of

the boys are rather disposed to hope that Early's interference may prove successful again in bringing us back. In fact, they would like to have him attack every time they attempt to move us from the Valley. Still I think General Sheridan would have pride enough to show them that he could whip them, Sixth Corps or no Sixth Corps. It is now reported that Colonel Edwards is to remain in command of the post, and that we are to go with the corps. That is rather compromising affairs. Colonel Edwards has been quite unwell for a week now, but is said to be improving under the devoted care of his wife. Mrs. Edwards is as pleasant as ever. She is, however, slightly worried by the Colonel's illness. . . .

Your affec. brother,

MASE.

Friday, December 2d. R. P. Lincoln mustered as Major.

Saturday, December 3d. The Third Division, Sixth Corps, passed through Winchester on its way to rejoin the Army of the Potomac to-day.

Wednesday, December 7th. I got leave of absence for twenty days and went home to Amherst.

CHAPTER XIX

PETERSBURG

DECEMBER 7, 1864, TO JULY 2, 1865

[INTRODUCTION.—During his leave of absence which commenced on December 7th and lasted twenty days, Captain Tyler kept in touch with his regiment and with the corps, and made a few notes from which we are enabled to follow their movements. By order of General Sheridan, December 9th, Colonel Edwards was assigned to the command of the Provisional District in addition to his duties as post commander at Winchester.[1]

On Monday, the 12th, the Thirty-seventh Regiment received orders to join the corps at Petersburg. They left Winchester the next day,[2] Tuesday, the 13th, marched to Stephenson's Depot about six miles, took freight cars for Harper's Ferry, where they changed to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and arrived in Washington early Wednesday morning, the 14th.

Captain Donnelly, who was in command, reported to General Halleck at once, and during the afternoon they embarked on the transport, *Lizzie Baker*, for City Point, where they arrived on the afternoon of Thursday, and were transported over the United States military railroad to Parke's Station. There they disembarked and "spent the night shivering in the cold and with very few facilities for keeping warm or comfortable." On Friday, the 16th, after a short march, they rejoined their brigade.

[1] O. R., xliii., pt. 2, p. 765.

[2] See *id.*, p. 779.

The division had already been there for some days. General Grant had informed General Meade that the Sixth Corps was about to leave the Valley, and had suggested "that it relieve the Fifth Corps in the lines." Accordingly, on December 4th, General Meade had ordered General Wheaton, commanding the First Division, Sixth Corps, to report at the army headquarters, near Parke's Station, and near the Aiken house.[1] General Wheaton had replied the same day, "I have the honor to report the arrival of my division—fifty-six hours from Winchester, . . . Your order to relieve Crawford's division, Fifth Corps, received. Will report in person, taking 8 A.M. train to-morrow.[2]

The line occupied by the Sixth Corps extended from Battery 24 on the right to Fort Wadsworth on the left, a distance of about two miles, but they had also to defend a strong line of fortifications in their rear. Fort Wadsworth was situated just west of the Weldon Railroad, and covered the Halifax road near its junction with the Vaughan road.

The position of the Third Brigade, First Division, was just to the right of the fort, almost directly south of Petersburg, which was four or five miles distant. They were in a swamp, and communication was mostly by corduroy paths and roads. The camp of the Thirty-seventh was located on the field which was the scene of the battle of the Fifth Corps for the possession of the Weldon Railroad, on the 18th of August last.[3]

The record of his own experience at home is confined to the relations of family and friends. On December 14th, he attended the Amherst Alumni dinner at Boston, was called upon to speak and responded. He spent Christmas at New Milford, Connecticut. On December 27th, his leave of absence was extended twenty days, on a certificate from Dr. Smith of Amherst. We may now follow the diary.—C. S.]

[1] O. R., xlii., pt. 3, p. 798. The Aiken house was about a mile east of Fort Wadsworth, directly south of the city of Petersburg. See War Map 77 (2).

[2] O. R., xlii., pt. 3, p. 798.

[3] See also War Maps 67 (9), 79 (1).

THURSDAY, January 12, 1865. I came from Amherst to Binghamton, New York, where I was most heartily and enthusiastically entertained.

Friday, January 13th. I came from Binghamton last night to New York, went to Taylor's International Hotel for breakfast, and after a day of visiting with friends, took the night train for Washington.

Saturday, January 14th. Arrived in Washington this morning. In letter of the 15th, I write:

At Washington, they attempted to send me to Camp Distribution to take charge of a body of men made up of stragglers, conscripts, convalescents, etc. As this is the most disagreeable and irksome duty that any officer can be assigned to, and it would necessarily delay me some days in a filthy camp, I demurred, and finally got off through the kindly intervention of General Abner Doubleday in my behalf. I was detained in Washington until 3 P.M. . . . As I had this time in Washington, I called on Mr. William Swinton, the distinguished war correspondent of the New York *Times*. He was the first French teacher I ever had and for a long time lived in my father's family. He treated me very cordially.

I afterwards called on Mr. Washburn, the representative in Congress from the district in which Amherst is situated, and he proposed to take me to the White House to shake hands with President and Mrs. Lincoln. It was a new experience to me, and I was glad to avail myself of the opportunity to go to the White House and attend a reception. Mr. Lincoln shook my hand rather mechanically but treated me graciously, either on account of Mr. W. or because I was a soldier. . . . I found friends on the boat, and we had a merry sail to City Point.

Sunday, January 15th. We sailed through Chesapeake Bay by Fortress Monroe, and up the James River, a very enjoyable trip. The same letter continues:

Five o'clock found me at home once more with my regiment, and the first greeting I received was, "How do you do, Major!" I was recommended for the brevet of major for conduct in the battle of Winchester, on September 19th last. I did not know that the recommendation had been made or confirmed until they showed me the newspaper report announcing it this afternoon. So you see a pleasant surprise awaited me.[1]

[1] The recommendation for promotion to which he refers was in the following language:

"HEADQUARTERS FIRST DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS,
"December 17, 1864.

"MAJ. C. A. WHITTIER,
"*Acting Assistant Adjutant-General, Sixth Corps.*

"MAJOR: In forwarding the accompanying recommendations made by the commanders of the First, Second, and Third Brigades of this division for brevet promotions in their respective commands, I have the honor to call the attention of the major-general commanding to the distinguished services of the brigade commanders, and to recommend the following promotions by brevet:

. . . . . .

"Col. Oliver Edwards, Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, commanding Third Brigade, to be brigadier-general U. S. Volunteers by brevet for gallantry and distinguished service in the battle of Spottsylvania Court-House, Va., May 12, 1864, and for meritorious conduct in the battle of Winchester, Va., September 19, 1864. . . .

"One regiment of this division is now on detached service at Winchester, Va., and no recommendations for that regiment have been forwarded by the commander of the brigade to which it belongs, the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, and I have the honor to make the following recommendations, as the facts referred to are personally known to me: Lieut.-Col. George L. Montague, commanding Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, to be colonel by brevet for distinguished gallantry in the battle of Spottsylvania Court-House, Va., May 12, 1864, in which battle he was severely wounded. Capt. Mason W. Tyler, Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, to be major by brevet for distinguished gallantry in the battle of Winchester, Va., September 19, 1864, in which battle he was wounded.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
"FRANK WHEATON,
"*Brevet Major-General, U. S. Volunteers.*"

(O. R., xlii., pt. 3, p. 1028–9.)

CAPTAIN MASON W. TYLER.

From a photograph taken in December, 1864.

In a letter dated Warren Station, January 19, 1865, he wrote to his brother Henry:

Colonel Edwards has been relieved from the command of the brigade, after spending a twenty days' leave with his wife. He is now in the West. He has been brevetted brigadier-general, but hesitates some, I understand, about accepting it.

I have been quite busy the last day or two building on an addition to my house. I have now got quite a grand house, a real palace, so to speak. It is fifteen feet long and some six and a half broad, five feet high at the sides, and seven in the centre. Two of us occupy it. It grieves me very much, however, that we cannot have a fireplace, because wood is so scarce in this neighborhood that it is impossible to get enough to supply a fireplace. Therefore we have to satisfy ourselves with little air-tight box stoves, which we have procured of the sutler. Captain Robinson and I are tenting together as of old. It is very convenient, as his company is next to mine. We have a mess of four persons, and we manage to live very comfortably. This morning we had corned beef hash, and to-morrow morning we expect to have fried pudding. Last night we had scalloped oysters. Our sutler has not come up yet, so that we have had to run hither and yon to buy what we wanted. We expect him now, however, in a day or two.

General Grant says that he expects to be in Richmond within six weeks, so they tell us at corps headquarters—and they ought to know. I hope it may prove so. We are rather expecting that Sherman or Thomas will happen down somewhere in this neighborhood. They will undoubtedly have something to do in solving the problem.

CAMP WARREN STATION,
January 23, 1865.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I am somewhat fatigued to-night, as I was up all last night and on picket duty. But I can't let this mail go

off without dropping you a line. I meant to have written you a long letter to-day, but I have had one continual stream of interruptions all day long. I was detailed for picket yesterday morning, and after thirty-six hours of incessant hard rain, I went out, wading in mud all the way to get there, and sitting or standing in mud all the time I was there. It is the worst line I ever was on.[1] The country is pretty much all marsh between us and the Rebs, and at this time nearly all overflowed. There is very little firing on our part of the lines. In fact, we live on quite amicable terms with our neighbors across the way. Whenever they intend to fire, they will give us warning by crying "Down-Yanks!" and we sometimes engage in quite spirited conversations with them. They are very rarely willing to exchange papers with us now, partly because they have had men take that opportunity to desert, and partly because they don't want us to have their papers. Desertions from their lines are quite frequent, and are now at the rate of one or two a day on our brigade front. They however are watched very closely, and have to run great risks to get away, so that they are not as frequent as they otherwise would be. We send over on every opportunity General Grant's orders in regard to deserters.[2]

[1] In another letter of the same date he wrote: "The lines are so close and the danger of a surprise so great that during the twenty-four hours of detail duty we are not allowed to sleep. Every man has to be on the alert."

[2] The subject of desertion will be frequently referred to in the letters that follow, and it may be well to explain the condition of affairs. The fear of the Rebel soldier that, if he deserted to the Union side, he would be compelled to take arms against his old companions, was laid at rest by an order of General Grant issued from the War Department at Washington, under date August 31, 1864, entitled Circular No. 31, and reading: "Deserters from the Rebel army are not subject to enrolment or draft, nor are they acceptable as substitutes or recruits."

But there were some questions which had to be settled. Should the deserter bring his arms with him, and if he did, were they his own property, or did they belong to the United States? Neither party knew. And then there was the all-important question: What was to become of

There is a Captain Young who is famous as a Rebel scout and always goes attended by a large white dog, who is a terror to their men. He spends his nights between the lines, and has caught many of their attempted deserters. He

those who deserted? General Wright reports on the 18th of February: "The enemy's pickets have several times recently called to our men, requesting that some one who was a Mason come out to meet one of their number, with a view of their ascertaining, in what they conceive to be a reliable way, what disposition is made of men deserting to our lines." General Meade authorized the communication to be held with the enemy's pickets for the purpose proposed (O. R., xlvi., pt. 2, p. 587). This whole matter was settled by Special Order No. 3:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMIES OF THE UNITED STATES,
"IN THE FIELD, VA., January 4, 1865.

"Hereafter deserters from the Confederate Army, who deliver themselves up to the U. S. forces, will, on taking an oath that they will not again take up arms during the present rebellion, be furnished subsistence and free transportation to their homes, if the same are within the lines of Federal occupation. If their homes are not within such lines, they will be furnished subsistence and free transportation to any point in the Northern States.

"All deserters who take the oath of allegiance will, if they desire it, be given employment in the Quartermaster's and other departments of the Army, and the same remuneration paid them as is given to civilian employees for similar services.

"Military duty, or service endangering them to capture by the Confederate forces, will not be exacted from such as give themselves up to the U. S. military authorities.

"Deserters who bring arms, horses, mules, or other property into our lines with them will, on delivering the same to the Quartermaster's department, receive in money the highest price such arms, horses, mules, and other property are worth.

"Railroad employees, telegraph operators, mechanics, and other civilians employed by the Confederate authorities, who desert from their present employment and come into the Federal lines, will be entitled to all the benefits and immunities of this order.

"By command of Lieutenant-General Grant:
"T. S. BOWERS,
"*Assistant Adjutant-General.*"

(O. R., *id.*, pp. 828, 829.)

On March 4th, this order was republished for the information and guidance of all concerned, and that very day General Wright reports that sixteen deserters had come within the lines of the Sixth Corps, eight

spends his time spying out our lines, and General Meade, it is said, has offered a large reward for his capture. Last night the dog, who is his sure precursor, was seen by two of our pickets. I immediately took five of our men, and set out in pursuit. We prowled around between the lines an hour or so, and not meeting him or finding any trace, we had to give it up as a bad job.[1] I did not expect to catch him, but I thought there was no harm in trying. We had an Indian with us who went up within a rod of the Rebel lines. We are not allowed to sleep one minute while on our tour of duty for fear of surprise. The Rebs did surprise a portion of our line a week or two since, and took some fifteen or twenty men prisoners. Since then we have had to be doubly guarded. Your affec. son,

MASE.

In a letter written January 25, 1865, he refers to one of the most exciting episodes in the siege of Petersburg:

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bringing their arms (*id.*, p. 829). On the 27th of January, General Lee called the attention of his government to the alarming number of desertions. He states that fifty-six men had deserted from General Hill's corps in three days. The cause of this, he thinks, is that the rations are too small. On the 11th of February, he issued a circular exhorting his men to stand by their colors, and deserters to return to their respective commands, and by the authority of the President of the Confederacy, he promises pardon to all who would return within a given time. But many of his men were not only hungry, they were discouraged, and not a few saw what must be the result of the fight in the not distant future, and resorted to all sorts of devices to make their escape.—C. S.

[1] This prowling between the lines was dangerous business. But it was characteristic of the man. When he saw a duty, however dangerous, and thought the cause for which he fought would be advanced by any exposure of himself, he never hesitated. At the battle of Fort Stevens in front of Washington, Colonel Edwards said, "I wish I knew what was behind that hill." Lieutenant Tyler replied, "I will find out," and taking a revolver in each hand he advanced. Just as he reached the top of the hill, a musket appeared and blazed away. He dropped on his face, but the ball passed through his hat, and he beat a speedy retreat. He always felt that the Reb did not intend to kill him and would not have come so near if he had stood on his feet.—C. S.

We have had quite an excitement here for a day or two past over this Rebel gunboat affair. Night before last we were aroused from our slumbers by a terrific cannonading. Very heavy guns were booming in the distance on our right, and little guns seemed to be firing an accompaniment the whole length of the line. They kept us awake the most of the night. Yesterday we heard that four Rebel gunboats had broken from their moorings in the James and been swept down the river, and coming below Fort Darling had engaged our heavy batteries and forts there; that three out of the four had been disabled by our fire, and one had passed down the river comparatively uninjured. As we had no ironclads in the river at the time, and this vessel was said to be a strong type of a monitor, fears were expressed all day yesterday that our shipping at City Point would be destroyed before our monitors could come from Fortress Monroe, and our ears were strained all day expecting to hear heavy guns announcing the opening of the battle. Night came and no guns were heard, and we were somewhat relieved. This morning, however, about 3 o'clock, the renewal of the firing told us that the fight had commenced. But we are still in the dark as to the actual facts and as to the result.[1]

[1] The incident here referred to caused a good deal of excitement and great anxiety to the general-in-chief. All but one of the Union ironclads had gone with General Terry on the second Fort Fisher expedition. General Grant, fearing lest the Confederate gunboats anchored in the James just below Richmond might make a dash at his base of supplies at City Point, suggested that a naval officer be sent, on the night of the 23d of January, to plant torpedoes in the river at Trent's Reach. That very night the officer sent back word that the fleet was already coming down the stream. It consisted of six ships three of which grounded on some obstructions in the river. The others came on and were engaged by the shore batteries. The *Onondaga*, a two-turreted monitor that ought to have sunk them all, withdrew and steamed down the river. General Grant's indignation knew no bounds. He telegraphed to the commander that "it would be better to obstruct the channel of the river with sunken gunboats than that a Rebel ram should reach City Point" (O. R., xlvi., pt. 2, p. 225). But at daybreak the *Onondaga* moved up

The next letter contains indications that the lieutenant-general is putting his army in order:

CAMP THIRTY-SEVENTH MASS. VOLS.,
Jan. 29 [1865].

MY DEAR MOTHER:

We are having a terribly cold Sunday. In fact, for a week we have had all that we could do to keep warm, night and day, and in spite of fire, two feet from the stove our tent has been as cold as a barn. The Potomac is frozen over so that we have received mail and provisions only every other day, and we have not had a potato for a week. In spite of cold weather, however, they had the Sunday morning inspection. They are making every effort to bring up the condition and the discipline of the troops, and consequently they make their weekly inspections very rigid. We had to stand out in this terrible cold air two mortal hours this morning (from 10 to 12), while the inspector went through the regiment. To be sure, the most of the time they stacked arms and allowed the men to move around. But they could not go to their houses and were exposed all the time to the merciless wind and cold air. I came pretty near freezing, and went in and warmed myself once or twice. It was so cold I did not rise this morning until after 8 o'clock, and had breakfast at 8.30. This, you will understand, is pretty late for me and my bones did ache before I got up. But I could stand it full as well as the cold. . . .

We have not yet got our chapel started, but the chaplain is intending to build one at the earliest opportunity. At present we have hardly teams enough to supply us with wood to burn. In fact the men bring all their wood nearly two miles, and it is becoming scarce at that distance. Our

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and opened fire upon the Confederate flagship, the *Virginia*, and with the shore batteries gave her a hard pounding. With the flood tide the enemy succeeded in getting their ships afloat and all retired up the river. During the day General Grant got up some heavy guns, and that night the Rebel fleet came down again, and a terrific artillery battle was kept up for hours, with disastrous results to the enemy.—C. S.

regimental surgeon returned last night. He has been home and got married and brought his wife back with him as far as Washington, where she expects to spend the winter and hopes to see him once or twice before the spring campaign opens. . . .

We don't see the papers now very often. They are not to be depended on these days. The last paper that I saw told us of the burning of Smithsonian Institute. I hope it is going to moderate. The air seems a little warmer to-night.

Your affec. son,

MASE.

The diary continues: During the month of February, we worked a good deal on Fort Fisher, which stands at the point where our lines turn to the south. In the immediate neighborhood, the Fiftieth New York Engineers built a beautiful Gothic church, which they called Poplar Grove Church, and at a little distance built a signal tower one hundred and fifty feet high.[1]

CAMP NEAR WARREN STATION,
Feb. 2, 1865.

MY DEAR FATHER:

. . . Colonel Edwards has lost his brigade, which causes something of a stir among us. It happens after this wise: You know the colonel has not yet returned, and General Wright, who is not friendly to the colonel, has taken advantage of his absence to have some one assigned, by virtue of his brevet rank, to the command of this brigade. So General Hamblin, a younger colonel than we have in our brigade, and who was brevetted at the same time as Colonel Edwards, is assigned by the President to the command at General Wright's solicitation. You know these brevet appointments confer no real rank unless especially assigned to duty in accordance with them by the President. Colonel Edwards, therefore, when he

[1] See Bowen, p. 403.

comes back will find him self superseded by a man whom he really outranks, and who is not one half as worthy of the place as he is. I don't think the colonel will stand it, and he will probably have to get out of the service as he would otherwise come back to the command of his regiment. They all say here that he will resign. I feel very sorry for the colonel, but fear that he can't get around it now.

Colonel Montague is here. He returned to the regiment last Monday, but is so unwell that he says he shall retire as soon as he can. His side is not perfectly healed, and the doctors tell him that there is danger of inflammation of the lungs if he exposes himself. . . . Did I tell you that General Sheridan offered to make Colonel Edwards provost marshal of the Middle Military Division if he would stay with him? But the colonel declined and chose to return to his brigade. He will be disappointed when he comes back to find that gone.

Ever your affec. son,
MASON.

Sunday, February 5th. Under marching orders from five this morning. Chaplain Morse has succeeded in fitting up a chapel, and held his dedication services this afternoon. We were packed up all day. At 7 P.M. we marched to the extreme left of the line, and one half mile beyond, outside the pits, threw up breastworks and spent the night.

During the day he wrote a short letter to his mother:

We are under marching orders, expecting every minute to move. The orders came suddenly about 5 o'clock this morning. They woke us out of a sound slumber, and we have been on the jump since. We shall probably leave our camp standing, as we have received no orders to take our tents down. We go provided with six days' rations, so that

we shall probably be back in a week. Rumor says that Grant is at Wilmington and Meade in command here.[1]

Monday, February 6th. We lay still all the morning doing nothing. About 3 P.M., we were ordered to move to the left, and proceeded along the Squirrel Level Road. The wounded of the Fifth Corps and cavalry were returning. We crossed Hatcher's Run. The Fifth Corps were driven back in confusion, and massed and moved into the pits. The Second Brigade of our division was engaged. The Fifth Corps, Third Division, fled and behaved very badly. It was nearly dark when we got into line, and after waiting two hours we were withdrawn and went into camp a mile in the rear. It was bitterly cold, and we were soaked with rain, which froze and stiffened our clothes under the influence of the wind. We built fires, but they were of little avail. The rain changed into snow, and we finally rolled up in our blankets and slept the sleep of exhaustion, wet as we were.

[1] This was but a rumor. On the 26th of January, General Grant went down the coast to Cape Fear, on a tour of inspection with General Schofield, but was back at headquarters when the order to march was given.

The lieutenant-general had a peculiar enmity towards all roads, highways as well as railroads, over which supplies could be brought to the enemy. When the Sixth Corps arrived at Petersburg, they relieved the Fifth in the lines, and the Fifth was immediately sent to destroy the Weldon Railroad for forty miles below Petersburg. But it was rumored that the enemy were bringing in supplies by wagons over the Boydton Plank Road. He immediately ordered a movement to put a stop to this. General Lee was very sensitive about his right flank, and could easily move troops from any part of his lines to defend it. When, therefore, a move was made to the left of the Union lines, it had to be in force. In this case, the Second and Fifth Corps were sent out, and the whole army was prepared to go to their assistance. There was much hard fighting during the day, and at night General Humphreys found himself hard pressed, having on his front a part of Hill's and Gordon's corps, and the First Division of the Sixth Corps was sent to his relief. The rest of the story is told in the diary.—C. S.

Tuesday, February 7th. We waited all day, expecting to go into action, but no orders came. The cold increased. The earth was stiffened to a solid surface by the frost. Wood was plenty, and we made large fires. About 1 o'clock, we received orders to return to camp, and reached our old quarters about 4 o'clock in the morning. We had three men wounded. Otherwise there was no loss.

In a letter, February 9th, to his brother William, from Camp Warren Station, he wrote:

I returned yesterday from our raid across Hatcher's Run. We had a most dismal time. It rained hard and blew very cold all day Tuesday, and we were both wet through and frozen stiff, and we only had one night's sleep out of three. Consequently, I came back slightly wearied with my exertions, and yesterday I felt dull enough. To-day, however, I feel brighter and have been reading quietly. I have at last got hold of Napier's *Peninsular War*, and am reading it with a great deal of pleasure. If they will only give me time enough to finish it before we have to enter upon the spring campaign, I shall think I have not entirely misspent my winter. Still, I don't do as much as I might if I only had the proper tools here to work with. Books are pretty scarce, and then we cannot get the proper accompaniment for a full appreciation of them. For instance, we need, in reading such a history as this, a good atlas for reference. Of course we have here no access to anything of the sort. I see by the papers to-day that Harry Gilmor is captured.[1] I should

[1] This is the Major Gilmor previously referred to, who left Mrs. O'Bannon's house at Winchester when he heard General Sheridan's guns, on the 19th of September. He was a Marylander, and one of the boldest and most successful partisan chiefs in the valley. He drew many of his recruits from his native State, and was very expert in his operations. Sheridan determined to get him, and put his scouts after him. It was found that he was expecting some recruits from Maryland and was awaiting them at a house about four miles from Moorfield, a

like to hear what my Rebel friends say to this if it is a fact. You know he was a paragon of excellence in their eyes. I must close to send this by to-night's mail.

CAMP 37TH MASS. VOLS., Feb. 13, '65.

MY DEAR BROTHER HEN:

I believe I am your debtor for one or two letters. I meant to have written you last week, but the first part of the week I was off on that raid, and since my return I have been occupied a portion of the time by court-martial duty, and the rest of the time it has taken all my energies to keep warm. I think yesterday and to-day have been the coldest days of the season, and last night the wind blew so that it tore our tents pretty much all to pieces, and came near leaving us looking through bare poles into the face of heaven which, in the existing state of the temperature, was not so nice. Still we survived the night by dint of close snugging and drifts of clothes.

We have been very much amused with the newspaper accounts of our last move across Hatcher's Run. The correspondents of the Fifth Corps have tried to cover up the bad behavior of a certain portion of the troops of that

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very disloyal district. The general ordered Major Young, his scoutmaster, to take twenty of his best men, put them in Confederate uniforms, represent himself as taking recruits to Gilmore and go to Moorfield, and he told him he would send a squad of Federal cavalry in pursuit of him. Major Young's representations that he had this body of recruits for Gilmore, and was hard pressed by the Union cavalry, secured for him accurate information and a ready access to the house. On arriving he said he must report at once, and going to the guerilla's room he covered him with his cocked six-shooter, and awaking him, imparted to him the information that he was a prisoner to one of General Sheridan's staff officers. Gilmore says, in his *Four Years in the Saddle*, that he remarked, "I suppose that you want me to go with you." To which the officer replied, "I shall be happy to have your company to Winchester, as General Sheridan wishes to consult you about some important military matters." Sheridan sent him to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor, where he remained until the war was over. It was a neat little job, well done, and caused a good deal of fun for those who had a right to laugh. (See *Sheridan's Memoirs*, ii., pp. 105–107).—C. S.

corps by all manner of excuses. One claims that they behaved most gallantly; another correspondent allows that there was slight confusion, but that they were overpowered by vastly superior numbers, and still another that the Sixth Corps, coming up in their rear, fired into them, producing confusion.

The facts in the case were simply these: The Third Division of the Fifth Corps was repulsed, and a causeless panic seized them and they ran more than a mile, and, more than that, they had no enemy of any consequence following them, and those who were nearest to their rear turned and fired upon those who were tardier in their flight and many were thus killed. One brigade of our division was rushed on the double-quick to their support, and the first they knew while they were moving by the flank, before they had had time to deploy, this frightened, rushing tide of men came back upon them, and for the moment threw them into confusion. But General Wheaton soon formed line, and after he had his brigade formed into line, it suffered more from shots fired by our own men in the rear than from the enemy.[1]

This was the brigade which General Warren told General Wheaton saved the day. We rallied several regiments and made them form just in our rear, but some were so frightened that they ran clear into Sixth Corps headquarters before they could be persuaded to halt, a distance of six miles. General Meade sent out his cavalry and arrested 2000 of them along the road who were putting for the rear as fast as they could go. I never saw such a rout, and it made me so mad I wanted to shoot some of the officers, who were as bad as the men—scared to death.

[1] See report of Major-General Wheaton, commanding First Division, Sixth Corps, O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 297. At page 299, he says: "While we were being fired upon, Major R. P. Lincoln, the division inspector, had been despatched to General Warren (Fifth Corps), who was close at hand, and informed him of our danger from his men, and through General Warren's exertions the firing was stopped."

It seems that the Rebs were behaving about as badly as our men, and General Lee's official report is much more favorable for us than our generals could publish, and it was circulated among our troops for their encouragement. I see by the papers that Major Shepard is among the missing. I am sorry to hear that, and hope he will turn up all safe yet.

I see Major Young of General Sheridan's scouts has captured Harry Gilmor and has taken him over to Fort Warren. I know Major Young as well as I do you almost. He was on Colonel Edwards's staff all summer and belongs to the Second Rhode Island Regiment of our brigade. I am mighty glad he has met with this success, for I think he is one of the bravest little fellows I ever saw in my life. He has been hunting after Mosby all the fall while we were in the valley. I should like to hear what my Winchester friends would say to Harry Gilmor's capture. If I were there I should laugh at them a little.

Colonel Montague has gone to Washington, and this leaves Captain Hopkins in command of the regiment. Colonel Edwards is expected back this week.

Yr. affec. brother,

MASE.

CAMP WARREN STATION, Feb. 15, 1865.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

Albert Kellogg started for home this morning, and I sent a couple of military pamphlets and some letters home by him. I was very glad the boy could get a chance to go. His mother has wanted so long to see him, and has been so long separated from him, that I hope it will relieve her anxieties.

I have a miserable cold to-day that makes my head feel bigger than a bushel basket. The day also has been one of those murky, stormy days that are well calculated to encourage such feelings. It is cold and rainy and muddy out of doors, and if you stay in, your stove smokes from disgust at the idea of associating its eruptions with such an

atmosphere as this weather affords. I have stayed in my tent pretty much all day, but I have been nearly suffocated several times with the smoke. I have managed, however, to read some fifty pages of Napier, and this afternoon I have written a letter to Carrie Tyler. So I have not been altogether idle. . . . There is some prospect that we may get paid up to January 1st next week. That is to say, some one announced that the paymasters are coming down to pay the army at that time. I hope and sincerely trust it is so.

Mr. Cutter brought me your box last Saturday night, and I ate a piece of pie, some currants, and a piece of cake, and tasted the honey before it had been here five minutes, and before the next night it was all gone. Much obliged. I should have said, however, that the bottle of honey, that is, two thirds of it, stands before me now as I write, and usually adorns the centre of my table, and is quite an object of curiosity to the uninitiated. I tell them it is Greek honey. Whether they fully appreciate that there should be any special merit in honey from the classic land, I am unable to say. But they appreciate it as coming from Greece full as well, I guess, as if I told them it came to them from Mount Hymettus.

Four deserters came in last night from the Rebs on our brigade line. They were said by those that saw them to be splendid-looking fellows, and were from North Carolina regiments. Almost all the deserters that we get now seem to be from the Old North State. They say that their State and their soldiers want to come back into the Union, and they individually believe it their duty to encourage it by setting the example.

Mr. Cutter came back, and now he has been detailed as nurse in the Sixth Corps hospital at City Point. He is unfit for field duty, and the hospital is the only place that he ought to serve. I think our Sixth Corps hospital here in the field is the most tastefully arranged camp that I have seen since I have been in the army. It is in the form of a cross and has a beautiful fence made of rough hewn timber,

and this fence describes all sorts of fantastic curves, and all the entrances are adorned with beautiful arches formed of fresh evergreens. There is some firing on the line to-night, the pickets seem to be having a lively time. I have sent my watch home by Albert Kellogg. I want it cleaned, and asked him to bring it back with him.

CAMP WARREN STATION, Feb. 22, 1865.

MY DEAR BROTHER HENRY:

. . . This is Washington's Birthday, and I suppose there will be a good deal of celebrating in the army as well as at home on account of the good news received yesterday. A hundred guns were fired yesterday in our line in honor of the victory.[1] You never saw anything like the desertions that are occurring among the Rebs these days. We average about twenty a night on our division line, and on the Ninth Corps I understand they have about one hundred a night. They tell large stories saying that what come this way are not a circumstance to what are going the other, and they all declare that, as soon as their men fully understand that there is no chance for peace, they will throw down their arms and come in *en masse*, and that they won't be led into any such struggle as they had last summer. Their very best and most substantial material seems to be deserting. Some of them are as intelligent men as you often see.

General Grant seems slightly apprehensive of an attack, as he has ordered one tenth of the command to be under arms at all hours of the day and night.[2] There seems to be

[1] The news of the evacuation of Fort Sumter reached the army on the 21st and a hundred guns were fired by order of General Grant. The Secretary of War ordered a hundred guns fired on the 22d in honor of the event, and it was done.—C. S.

[2] General Meade had been called away to attend the funeral of his son, and General Parke, commanding the Ninth Corps, was in command of the Army of the Potomac, when the following characteristic letter was written:

an impression that Lee has got to do something desperate, and that very soon. But I hardly think his army is in any condition for such undertaking at the present time.

I am having a chimney put up for my tent. I could not stand the stove any longer. . . .

We have just received orders to look out for an attack, so I must close for this time.

Your affec. brother,
MASE.

Friday, February 24. We heard to-day of the capture of Wilmington, North Carolina.[1]

"CITY POINT, VA., Feb. 22, 1865.

"MAJOR-GENERAL PARKE,

"*Commanding Army of the Potomac:*

"As there is a possibility of an attack from the enemy at any time, and especially an attempt to break your centre, extra vigilance should be kept up both by the pickets and the troops on the line. Let commanders understand that no time is to be lost awaiting orders, if an attack is made, in bringing all their reserves to the point of danger. With proper alacrity in this respect I would have no objection to seeing the enemy get through.

"U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*"

(O. R., xli., pt. 2, p. 631.)—C. S.

"CITY POINT, Feb. 24th.

"MAJOR-GENERAL PARKE:

"Announce to your troops the capture of Wilmington on the 22d instant by the troops under Schofield and Terry. Fire a shotted salute in honor of the event at 4 o'clock this afternoon.

"U. S. GRANT, *Lieutenant-General.*"

(O. R. xlvi., pt. 2, p. 670.)

The following circular by General Wright to the officers and soldiers of the Sixth Corps, dated February 25th, will explain a reference in a letter written the next day. "As any movement on the enemy's part is at once to be followed up, the entire corps, without striking tents, will be held ready to move in pursuit at a moment's warning. The major-general commanding deems the utmost vigilance on the part of the pickets, and readiness on the part of the whole command to move promptly, as of first importance, and trusts that the corps will not be behind the others in the army in these particulars." (O. R., *ibid.*, p. 695.)—C. S.

CAMP WARREN STATION, Feb. 26th.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

We have been pretty much all excitement this past week. First the fall of Charlestown, then the capture of Fort Anderson, then, Friday, we received the announcement of the capture of Wilmington. For two or three days here we have been expecting the evacuation of Petersburg to take place. Four days ago, as we learned from deserters, General Lee gave the order to prepare for evacuation. The middle of the week we thought he was going to assault and attempt to break through our lines, and we were up betimes and ready for him, but no General Lee came. Last night we received the order to be ready to move at any hour in the night, as it was thought the Rebs were moving across the river. We were not, however, disturbed, so I suppose they have not yet gone from our front.

Deserters are coming in at the rate of about seventy a night on our corps line. They keep us pretty well informed in regard to the movements of the enemy. Night before last a whole company of South Carolina troops came in. It is not often that we get them from that State.[1] We occasionally see a Richmond paper a day later than we get from the North. Some of them are very blustering, and others do nothing but grumble and find fault.

Amid all the gloom and desperation of the Southern cause, however, I must say I cannot but admire the calm, placid language of General Lee's despatches and letters. Not a word of boastfulness or even enthusiasm that would lead you to think that he was overdoing the matter to inspire hope among the people, and on the other hand there is not one sign of despondency, but every letter bears the impress of resolution and even of confidence in the result. He must be a great man.

Colonel Edwards returned Friday morning and is at present in command of the regiment. He has decided to

[1] General Wright reports that seventy-six deserters came in, about two-thirds with arms (O. R., xlvi., pt. 2, p. 674).

remain in the service. They offer him a brigade in the Second Corps and also one in the Second Division of our corps. He rather expects to go to the Second Corps. Letters from Montague last night state that he expects to be out of the service soon. I was in command of the regiment for a day or two, while Captain Hopkins was officer of the picket line. It is so stormy this morning that our inspection has been postponed. I am officer of the day and consequently on duty, and have to look out for a surprise in case of an attack on our line. One tenth of our command is under arms all the time now. It has cleared off beautifully this afternoon, although the wind blows roughly and makes our tent flap. I think that our large chapel will be rather airy. The church bells have just sounded and I must cease my writing.

Time passes rather stupidly for me these days, in that my eyes deny me the privilege of reading or writing to any great extent. My tent mate reads the papers to me and sometimes other things.

Your affec. son,
MASE.

In a letter to his brother, dated Warren Station, February 26th, he wrote:

Yesterday I was very busy, as I had to muster the regiment. I am not half through my work yet, as I still have more than fifty rolls to look over and correct, which all devolves upon me, as Colonel Edwards is sick and Captain Hopkins is sitting at court martial. We are, however, waiting a day or two for the arrival of the paymaster before we finish our rolls, trusting that we shall be paid up to December 31st.

Monday I was detailed to take charge of a party of 300 men from our division who are at work building Fort Fisher. This fort occupies the nearest point of our lines to the South Side Railroad, and is a large, bastioned work capable

of holding 3000 men. Our corps has been at work on it over a month, and it is now nearly completed and is one of the strongest works on our lines. The Rebs have two strong works opposite to it, about 2000 yards distant. Just below Fort Fisher the opposing lines are so near together that the men from both sides chop wood from the same trees and are on perfectly good terms. Now, however, for a week past they are very chary of our men. They are watched much more strictly by their officers on account of the great number of desertions that have taken place. On this account, desertions are not quite as frequent as they have been. Those that do come in, however, report that General Lee has gone to North Carolina, and Johnston is in command of the army. . . .

I have a splendid new fireplace and am enjoying the comfort of it amazingly. Colonel Edwards is talking of taking command of a negro division in Weitzel's corps.[1]

[The month of March was an exceedingly anxious time for the lieutenant-general, but until the last of the month nothing transpired of interest to the outside world. Inspections grew more and more rigid, a vigilant watch was kept on the movements of the enemy to prevent surprise, for General Grant had made up his mind that Lee would try to break the Union lines. But his greatest anxiety was lest he should wake up some morning and find the Rebel army gone.[2] Against both these contingencies he made ample provision. In the meantime, the daily report of the corps commanders was, "Nothing of importance in front of my lines during the last twenty-four hours." This was followed by a statement of the number of deserters who had come in. On the 24th, General Grant issued his orders for an advance on the 29th.[3]

[1] Weitzel was, at this time, at Bermuda Hundred, with the rest of the Army of the James. See *Grant's Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 434.

[2] See O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 52; *Grant's Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 430.

[3] *Grant's Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 434; O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 50.

During this period, the diary was almost entirely neglected, and the letters were given up to personal and domestic matters. Major Tyler during this time had to be very careful about the use of his eyes, and did not read or write more than he was obliged to. Saturday, March 4th, he records the fact that he was this day commissioned major, under date of February 14th.

But General Grant's expectation about an attack in force was realized. On the night of the 24th, General Gordon, with his corps reinforced by Bushrod Johnson's division, made an attempt to break the Union lines between Fort Stedman and Battery No. 10, in front of the Ninth Corps.[1] "The plan," says General Grant, "was well conceived and the execution of it very well done indeed, up to the point of carrying a portion of our line."[2] They succeeded in capturing the fort and several batteries, but the Union army was on the alert and, without orders from General Meade who was at City Point, troops were hurried from all points along the lines to the point of danger. But before they arrived, General Parke, commanding the Ninth Corps, had recaptured the fort and batteries. The attack cost Lee four thousand men and the Union army about two thousand. The Sixth and Second Corps were commanded by General Meade to feel the enemy's strength in their front and to take advantage of any weakness. The next entry in the diary refers to this attack.—C. S.]

Saturday, March 25th. The Rebs attacked and captured Fort Stedman. Our division was ordered to go and aid in its recapture. But the Ninth Corps recaptured it before we got there. We were then ordered back and made a charge and captured the Rebel picket line in front of Fort Wadsworth about 4 o'clock. President and Mrs. Lincoln, General and Mrs. Grant,

[1] See War Map 77 (2), on the east side of the city of Petersburg.
[2] *Memoirs*, vol. ii, p. 431.

and General Meade visited Fort Wadsworth and watched the movement of the troops.[1] I was wounded in the charge while in command of the regiment.[2]

Sunday, March 26th. Our division returned to camp this morning at 4 o'clock.

In a letter from Warren Station he wrote to his parents:

I drop you a line this afternoon to relieve your anxieties, as you will probably hear that I am wounded before this reaches you. I was scratched yesterday afternoon in the fight that our corps had with A. P. Hill's troops. The ball glanced from a tree, and just grazed my knee at the joint. I thought at first the joint was shattered all to pieces, but soon found that I could move it. I stayed on the field mounted on my horse until nine in the evening, and then returned to camp. To-day I am very stiff.

P. S.—Fred Allen[3] has just come in and is to stay six weeks in the service of the Christian Commission. It seems good to see him. The ball, you understand, did not pierce the flesh, but merely grazed it, producing a contusion, and on that particular spot it is rather uncomfortable. The doctors say that I may be around in a week and may not in a month.

[Fred Allen adds:] I write this at Mason's side. I am here to-day, and hearing of Mason's being hurt, hunted him up immediately and am delighted to find that his injury is so slight. I am settled down for six weeks within

[1] It is possible that this was a camp rumor only, as no mention of the visit has been found in the historical authorities.

[2] See itinerary of this date, O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 100. Colonel Edwards, commanding the Third Brigade, First Division, Sixth Corps, in his report of the affair of the 25th, says: "The brigade behaved entirely to my satisfaction, and I would particularly mention the Fifth Wisconsin Volunteers, Colonel Allen, and the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, Major Tyler commanding" (O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 301).

[3] The Rev. Frederick B. Allen.

300 feet of him at the Christian Commission quarters, and shall see a good deal of him. You may be assured I shall do whatever I can for him.

Monday, March 27th. Major Young called.[1]

[Major Tyler was not destined to have a hand in the great campaign which was about to commence—the campaign of the Appomattox. On the 24th of March, General Grant issued his order for an advance of both the Army of the Potomac and the Army of the James, to commence on the 29th, "for the double purpose of turning the enemy out of his present position around Petersburg, and to insure the success of the cavalry under General Sheridan, which will start at the same time, in its effort to reach and destroy the South Side and Danville Railroads."[2]

The desperate attempt of General Lee, on the morning of the 25th, to break the Union lines did not delay the movement ordered by the lieutenant-general, but rather prepared the way for it. Fort Stedman had hardly been recaptured when orders were sent to the corps commanders "to feel the strength of the enemy's lines in their front and to take advantage of any weakness." The Sixth Corps was advanced at once and after some hard fighting succeeded in capturing the enemy's rifle-pits. Several determined but unsuccessful efforts were made to recapture them. It was in this struggle for the rifle-pits that Major Tyler was wounded while in command of his regiment. The result of the fight was the advance of the Union lines something like half a mile. This proved to be a great advantage, for it was on this very ground that the Sixth Corps formed in line of battle when ordered to storm, on the morning of the 2d of April, the fortifications in their front.

Major Tyler's wound proved to be more serious than

[1] This is the Major Young who caught Gilmor. See pages 328 and 331, above.

[2] O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 50.

was at first anticipated, and the army doctors advised him that amputation was necessary. He had seen so much of reckless haste in such cases in the army that he concluded to ask for a furlough and have the advice of a city specialist. The surgeon in Boston also advised amputation; but the family physician in Amherst undertook to save the leg by special treatment. His advice was followed, and in the end proved effectual. But the healing process was slow and excessively painful, and it was several months before he was able to return to his regiment.

After the surrender of the Rebel army at Appomattox, the Sixth Corps was retained for service in Virginia and was not present at the grand review of the Army of the Potomac at Washington on the 23d of May. It was arranged to have a review of the Sixth Corps at Richmond on the 24th. That afternoon they started on their homeward march, and on June 2d the Thirty-seventh went into camp at Bailey's Cross Roads about five miles from Washington. It was at this place on June 6th that Major Tyler rejoined his regiment, as he was able to do by the use of a cane. On the 8th, the corps was reviewed in Washington by the President and his Cabinet, with Generals Grant and Meade and many other officers.

The historian of the regiment thus describes the scene: "For this event, the command was roused very early in the morning, crossing Long Bridge to the vicinity of the Capitol, where the corps was massed. At 9.30 the advance guard, the First Connecticut Cavalry, cleared the way, and at 10 the column began to move. The brigades and divisions proceeded in numerical order, the artillery following the Third Division, and the rear being composed of 200 New York engineers, with a pontoon train. The Third Brigade, First Division, General Edwards, moved in the following order: Eighty-second Pennsylvania Veterans, 960 men, Brevet Brigadier-General Bassett; Second Rhode Island Veterans, 450 men, Lieutenant-Colonel Rhodes; Forty-ninth Pennsylvania Veterans, 305 men, Colonel Hickman;

Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, 300 men, Major Tyler; Fifth Wisconsin, 400 men, Colonel Allen. As the Thirty-seventh passed the reviewing-stand by company front, fewer in numbers than any of its sister organizations, the waste of the terrible campaigns it had passed through was vividly realized. Company K, the color company, proudly bore the tattered standards before the cheering multitudes with scarcely eight files to guard the priceless treasures."[1]

The diary records only a few facts and dates.—C. S.]

Wednesday, June 21st. The Thirty-seventh Regiment was mustered out to-day.

Thursday, June 22d. Reveille sounded at 3, broke camp at 5 under General Edwards and marched to Washington; took cars at 11 A.M., reached Baltimore at 3 P.M., started again at 5, reaching Philadelphia after midnight, and were feasted as usual at the Cooper shop.

Friday, June 23d. At daylight took cars for Amboy, and by transport from there reached New York at noon. After dinner marched up Broadway, and at 6 P.M., boarded steamboat *Traveller* for Hudson, which place we reached at daylight of the 24th, and at 5.30 breakfasted.

Saturday, June 24th. Reached Pittsfield by train at 10 o'clock. Twenty-seven cars took us out in 1862; we only required six cars when we returned. We were welcomed by Henry L. Dawes, United States Senator, and E. H. Kellogg. Reached Springfield by train at 2.30 P.M., were taken to the City Hall and feasted. Very enthusiastically received. Reached Readville that evening, and went into camp.

Monday, June 26th. Regimental colors were delivered to the care of the Commonwealth at the State-house.

[1] Bowen, p. 427.

Sunday, July 2d. Payment of men and officers completed, men discharged and regiment disbanded.

CONCLUSION

[It was a great experience to have been associated for nearly three years with such a body of men as composed the Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac. Colonel Tyler[1] was very proud of his regiment and of the corps to which it belonged. The nature of the service rendered by the Thirty-seventh is clearly indicated in the fact that the regiment lost in killed and mortally wounded 169 men, besides twelve who died in Rebel prisons. The character of the men in his company is well illustrated by the fact that not one of them deserted.

The Sixth Corps had a great record. Its name will ever be associated with that of Sheridan and the brilliant campaign in the Valley of the Shenandoah. But the last few days of its service were the most remarkable of all. Agreeable to the orders of the lieutenant-general, Sheridan, with the cavalry and the Fifth Corps, moved out on the 29th of March to the left, and on the 31st, he sent word to General Grant: "If the ground would permit, I believe I could, with the Sixth Corps, turn the enemy's left or break through his lines, but I would not like the Fifth Corps to make such an attempt." General Grant replied the same day: "It will be impossible to give you the Sixth Corps for the operation by our left. It is in the centre of our line between Hatcher's Run and the Appomattox. Besides, Wright thinks he can go through the line where he is, and it is advisable to have troops and a commander there who feel so, to co-operate with you when you get around."[2]

[1] He was appointed May 4, 1865, Lieutenant-Colonel, and June 26, 1865, Colonel, of the regiment by brevet. He could not be commissioned as Colonel, although in command of the regiment, because the losses in the service had depleted the ranks of the regiment below the numbers required by law for a commissioned officer of that rank.

[2] O. R., xlvi., pt. 3, p. 380.

General Sheridan with the cavalry and the Fifth Corps, on the 1st of April, gained a decisive victory at Five Forks, cutting off the right wing of Lee's army from the main body. When the news reached General Grant's headquarters, about 9 o'clock, the corps commanders were immediately informed and asked as to their condition. At 11 P.M., General Wright, commanding the Sixth Corps, replied: "Everything will be ready. The corps will go in solid, and I am sure will make the fur fly. The general plan being understood well by the various commanders, there will be no hesitation from want of knowledge of what is expected. If the corps does half as well as I expect, we will have broken through the Rebel lines fifteen minutes from the word 'go.'"[1] This despatch was sent by General Meade to General Grant, who replied, "I like the way Wright talks; it argues success. I heartily approve."[2] Orders were immediately issued for an advance at 4 o'clock the next morning.

The Sixth Corps was formed in line of battle at 1 o'clock on the morning of the 2d, on the ground captured by them on the 25th where Major Tyler was wounded, and a little after four the charge was made. An eye-witness standing on the parapet of Fort Welch thus described the scene to Brigadier-General Hazard Stevens, assistant adjutant-general, serving on the staff of General Getty, commanding the Second Division, Sixth Corps: "He related to me, not long afterwards, that he was standing on the parapet when the advance was ordered, and was anxiously peering into the darkness and awaiting the result in doubt and apprehensive of disaster. He could hear the muffled tramp and rustle of the moving host, but could discern nothing. He saw the flashes of the first volley; he heard the mighty shout of ten thousand throats, and then he saw, stretching across the front for half a mile a line of flashing fire, crackling, blazing, and sparkling in the darkness, vividly lightened up here and there by the heavier and

[1] O. R., xlvi., pt. 3, p. 423. [2] *Id.*, p. 399.

deeper flash of artillery, while shells with their fiery trail sped forward through the gloom in every direction. Although missiles hurtled overhead, and stray bullets went hissing past, he could not leave, but stood intently watching that deadly line of fire. Suddenly in the middle of it there appeared a tiny black spot, a narrow gap, which spread and widened, inch by inch and moment by moment, to the right and left, and then he knew the works were carried, even before the exulting cheers of our troops proclaimed the fact."[1]

The centre of Lee's army was shattered. In vain were his desperate efforts to stay the victorious column. The position he had so long held had become untenable, and that day he ordered the evacuation of Richmond. The lieutenant-general did not forget the wish of General Sheridan, and says: "When the move towards Amelia Court-House had commenced that morning, I ordered Wright's corps, which was on the extreme right, to be moved to the left past the whole army, to take the place of Griffin's, and ordered the latter at the same time to move by and place itself on the right. The object of this movement was to get the Sixth Corps, Wright's, next to the cavalry, with which they had formerly served so harmoniously and so efficiently in the valley of Virginia."[2]

Late in the afternoon of April 6th, the rear guard of the Rebel army made a stand at Sailor's Creek. The Sixth Corps had now to face about ten thousand of Lee's veterans, but not even the fatigue of this strenuous campaign had dampened their ardor. As a result, they took or put *hors de combat* some six thousand of the enemy, and among those taken prisoners were Lieutenant-General Ewald and Brigadier-General Custis Lee (son of General Robert E. Lee), the latter being captured by Corporal David White of Company E of the Thirty-seventh Massachusetts Regiment.

The next morning presented a scene unparalleled in

[1] Papers of the Historical Society of Massachusetts, vol. vi., p. 426.

[2] *Personal Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 473.

history. Two great opposing armies rushing through a country as yet unvisited by war, in the full beauty of early spring, without firing a gun, both the pursued and the pursuers exerting all the strength that it was possible for men to exert. At 7 o'clock in the evening of April 7th, General Grant hinted to General Lee that "he felt that further resistance on his part was useless." On the morning of the 9th of April, the Rebels found Sheridan with his cavalry standing across their path, and while they were preparing to attack him, the cavalry withdrew from right to left, and disclosed the Fifth Corps and Ord's Army of the James.

With two army corps and the cavalry in front, and two army corps pressing upon his rear, the great general with his brave soldiers who had so long baffled the Army of the Potomac was now between the upper and nether millstones. "To fight would have been a crime equal to deliberate murder," to surrender was honorable, and never, up to that time certainly, had a foe won or received more generous terms.

Major-General Wright, commanding the Sixth Corps, thus describes the spirit of the corps during the last few days of the war: "In this battle of Sailor's Creek, the corps nobly sustained its previous well-earned reputation. It made the forced march which preceded that battle with great cheerfulness and enthusiasm, and went into the fight with a determination to be successful seldom evinced by the best troops, and by its valor made the battle of Sailor's Creek the most important of the last and crowning contests against the Rebel Army of Northern Virginia. To it had fallen the opportunity of striking the decisive blows, not only at Petersburg, on the 2d of April, but at Sailor's Creek, on the 6th, and most gallantly did it vindicate the confidence reposed in it by its own officers and the commander of the Army of the Potomac. The corps has always fought well, but never better than in the assault at Petersburg, and at Sailor's Creek four days after."[1]

[1] O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 907.

But the Sixth Corps won not only the commendations of its own commander, but also those of the major-general, commanding the Army of the Potomac. On April 17th, General Meade addressed the officers and soldiers presenting battle-flags captured by the Sixth Corps:

"Officers and soldiers of the Sixth Corps: I thank you very much for these numerous proofs of your valor captured during the recent campaign. I do not wish to make any invidious distinctions between your own and the other corps of this army. They performed with valor and courage the part assigned to them. But candor compels me to say that in my opinion the decisive movement of this campaign which resulted in the capture of the Army of Northern Virginia was the gallant and successful assault of the Sixth Corps on the morning of the 2d of April. It was with much pleasure I had received a despatch from your commander assuring me his confidence in your courage was so great that he felt confident of his ability to break through the enemy's lines. I finally ordered the charge to be made at 4 o'clock on the morning of the 2d, and it was with still greater satisfaction that a few hours afterward I had the pleasure of transmitting a despatch to the general-in-chief telling him the confidence of your brave commander had been fully borne out.

"To you, brave men, I return the thanks of the country and of the army. To each of you a furlough of thirty days will be granted to enable you to present these proofs of your valor to the War Department. Let us all hope that the work upon which we have been engaged for nearly four years is over, that the South will return to its allegiance, and that our beloved flag will once more float in triumph over a peaceful and undivided country extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Saint Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico."—C. S.][1]

[1] O. R., xlvi., pt. 1, p. 909.

APPENDIX

Account of the Parts Taken and the Positions Occupied by the Several Brigades of the Sixth Corps at the Battle of the Bloody Angle at Spottsylvania Court-House

First Brigade of the First Division of the Sixth Corps, usually known as the First New Jersey Brigade

THIS brigade was composed of the following regiments: First, Second, Third, Fourth, Tenth, and Fifteenth New Jersey Volunteers.

It was commanded at this time by Colonel Henry W. Brown. Upon the arrival of the brigade with the balance of the First Division of the Sixth Corps at 9.30 o'clock on the morning of the 12th in front of the works at Spottsylvania, the brigade was assigned a position in front of the point assaulted and captured by General Upton on the 10th of May, as heretofore described. They were at once formed into a column of attack in which the First, Fourth, and Fifteenth Regiments constituted the first line, and four companies of the Second Regiment (the other six being on picket), and the Third and Tenth constituted the second line.

By 10 o'clock the column was ready to move, and the order was given to advance and charge.

The following description of that charge is given in Haines's *History of the Fifteenth Regiment New Jersey Volunteers*, at pages 174 and 176:

Colonel Penrose led his command [the Fifteenth Regiment] with great steadiness, forbidding his men to fire a musket until they saw the enemy, and every shot should tell. We had first to break our way through a thicket of scraggy pines with dead limbs. Then, as we emerged from the cover, there was a piece of open ground to cross. Beyond this were fallen trees making the abatis; and then the works. These were formed with a bank of earth and logs upon the top, with an opening three inches wide through which our foes could fire with little exposure to themselves. As soon as we appeared, charging over the open plain, they poured upon us their deadly, concentrated fire. Our direction brought us obliquely upon their works. For a long distance to our right, the enemy's rifle-pits could be seen, and their occupants, having no attacking enemy on their front, poured an enfilading fire upon our ranks. In the short space of time required to cross the flat, two hundred men were stretched lifeless, or helpless with wounds, upon the ground.

The Fifteenth did not falter, but dashed on through the abatis and over a portion of the breastworks, some of our numbers falling dead upon the other side. We captured about one hundred prisoners, and a flag belonging to the Fourteenth Georgia, which was seized and borne away by Jacob Stutz, Company B. We drove out or bayoneted those who tenaciously clung to their works. Some threw down their muskets and lifted their hands in token of surrender, and lay crouching in the ditch, only, however, to resume their weapons when their captors were more hardly pressed. . . .

The tenure of our part of the captured works was brief. An enfilading fire from each side poured into our thin ranks. The enemy from the second line of works sent a continuous shower of bullets. It was impossible to hold the captured

bank so long as it was swept by works untaken. Accordingly, the men were ordered by Colonel Penrose to fall back, and when Colonel Campbell gathered his shattered battalion beneath the hill, scarce an hundred could be counted.

The following is the list of the losses in this brigade from the 8th to the 21st of May, as given in the Official Reports, xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 144. This includes the killed, wounded, and missing.

The First New Jersey lost 62; Second New Jersey, 68; Third New Jersey, 148; Fourth New Jersey, 89; Tenth New Jersey, 149; Fifteenth New Jersey, 272; Total, 788.

I have not been able to find any official records or any report of the part taken by this brigade, and the only regimental report is that of the Fourth New Jersey contained in the O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 664. But in this account no particulars are given, although the charge is described, and desperate fighting by the command spoken of.

In Foster's history,[1] in which the designated numbers of the regiments engaged are mentioned, no mention is made of the Tenth New Jersey. That the Tenth was present in the engagement, and bore its share of the fighting, is indicated by the loss that it incurred as given in the above table. In fact, this brigade for about half an hour was engaged in as severe a hand-to-hand, life-and-death struggle as occurred upon the field. After they were driven out from the works, they apparently resumed their position at or near the point where they formed for the attack, and continued there during the day.

[1] *New Jersey and the Rebellion*, by John Y. Foster, is probably the book here referred to.

SECOND BRIGADE OF THE FIRST DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS UPTON'S BRIGADE

This brigade was comprised of four regiments, to wit: Fifth Maine, One Hundred Twenty-first New York, Ninety-fifth and Ninety-sixth Pennsylvania.

As before stated, Upton's brigade arrived on the field at 9.30 o'clock in the morning, and was immediately ordered forward to the point where the fight was raging at its hottest, about two hundred feet to the south of the west or Bloody Angle.

General Upton, in his report, describes his movements as follows:

The right flank of this corps being threatened, General Russell directed me to move to the right at double-quick to support it. Before we could arrive it gave way. As the Ninety-fifth Pennsylvania Volunteers reached an elevated point of the enemy's works, about 600 yards to the right of the Landrum house, it received a heavy volley from the second line of works. Seeing that the position was of vital importance to hold, and that all the troops had given way up to this point, I halted the Ninety-fifth Pennsylvania Volunteers, faced to the front, and caused it to lie down.

Its left rested near the works connecting with the Second Corps, while its right, refused, lay behind a crest, oblique to the works. Had it given way, the whole line of intrenchments would have been recaptured, and the fruit of the morning's victory lost, but it held the ground till the Fifth Maine and One Hundred and Twenty-first New York came to its support, while the Ninety-sixth Pennsylvania Volunteers passed on to its right. Shortly after, the Third and Vermont Brigades arrived. A section of Gilliss's battery of the Fifth U. S. artillery, under Lieutenant Metcalf, came up and opened fire, but was immediately charged and lost nearly every horse, driver, and cannoneer. The enemy

charged up to his works within 100 feet of the guns, but a well-directed fire from the infantry behind the crest prevented his farther advance. At the point where our line diverged from the works, the opposing line came in contact, but neither would give ground, and for eighteen hours raged the most sanguinary conflict of the war. The point remained in our possession at the close of the struggle, and is known as the Angle. The brigade was relieved at 5. 30 P.M. by Colonel McLaughlen's of the Second Corps.

. . . After being relieved, the brigade was held in reserve, and after dark was marched to the right of General Rickett's line, near the position occupied on the 9th. [1]

The position referred to as the one occupied on the 9th was in the vicinity of the Alsop house.

Three regiments of this brigade, the Fifth Maine, One Hundred Twenty-first New York, and the Ninety-sixth Pennsylvania, were in the forefront of the assault made on May 10th, under General Upton's lead, upon the same works which were captured by the Second Corps on the 12th of May.

The losses of the twelve regiments involved in Upton's assault are usually stated as amounting to one thousand, killed, wounded, and missing. What proportion of this was borne by the three regiments from Upton's brigade, I do not know. The losses incurred by the three Vermont regiments that participated in that assault are stated in Benedict's history[2] to have been eighty-eight. This should leave a loss of over 900 to be apportioned to the nine other participating regiments, or an average loss to each regiment of 100. So far as Upton's brigade is concerned, the probability is that their loss in the assault of the 10th of May was over 300 rather than under that figure. The losses of

[1] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 669.

[2] *Vermont in the Civil War.* See page 451.

Upton's brigade from May 8th to 21st, as given in the Official War Records, are as follows: Fifth Maine, 131; One Hundred Twenty-first New York, 155; Ninety-fifth Pennsylvania, 135; Ninety-sixth Pennsylvania, 178; Total, 599.

If we deduct from this their estimated losses on the 10th, to wit, 300, and the losses incurred by this brigade at Myers's Hill on the 14th, which General Upton, in his report, figures at 100, and which must be included in the foregoing total, the losses of each of the four regiments of the brigade on May 12th would be 99 killed, wounded, and missing.

The foregoing report of General Upton requires explanation in several particulars. There is no doubt that the point where General Upton halted the Ninety-fifth Pennsylvania, with its left resting near the works, etc., was a point in the earthworks about 200 feet south of the west or Bloody Angle. They did not connect there with the Second Corps. They did connect with Edwards's brigade, and the nearest troops of the Second Corps at that point, at the time, were portions of regiments of Mott's division which joined on the left of the Thirty-seventh near the east angle, as I have already stated. These portions of the regiments were driven out of the earthworks about 10 o'clock of May 12th.

The Thirty-seventh Massachusetts held its position on the exterior of those works continuously from 6 o'clock in the morning of May 12th until 4 o'clock of the morning of the next day, as will more clearly appear when I come to describe the part taken in this battle by Edwards's brigade.

As to the position of Upton's and Edwards's brigades, I speak from personal knowledge, because I was there. This is consistent with General Upton's statement

above quoted in his report to the effect that "at a point where our line diverged from the works, the opposing lines came in contact, but neither would give ground, and for eighteen hours raged the most sanguinary conflict of the war." This latter statement is not consistent with the previous statement that "all the troops had given way up to this point." I suppose that General Upton's earlier statement that the right flank of the Second Corps gave way before he arrived, refers to the giving way of Mott's troops on the left of Edwards's brigade, to which I have just referred.

Although Upton's brigade was not protected by earthworks when they first went into position, yet at the place where their line of battle was formed there was a natural ridge, behind which they could lie down, and it did not take them long to convert this into rifle-pits which gave them adequate protection. But for this their losses would have been much greater.

THIRD BRIGADE OF THE FIRST DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS RUSSELL'S BRIGADE

This brigade consisted of four regiments, to wit: Sixth Maine, Forty-ninth and One Hundred Nineteenth Pennsylvania, and the Fifth Wisconsin.

At the time of General Sedgwick's death, when General Russell was promoted to the command of the First Brigade, Sixth Corps, General Eustis was transferred from our brigade and put in command of this Third Brigade, filling the vacancy caused by General Russell's promotion, and at the same time Colonel Edwards was given command of our brigade.

During the summer of 1864, when Edwards's brigade was transferred from the Second to the First Division,

it was consolidated with Russell's old brigade, and in this way it happens that the report found in the Official Records, vol. xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 672, was signed by Colonel Edwards, as the commander of that brigade. This would account for the exceedingly brief and formal character of that report. It was not made by any of the officers who commanded the brigade at the time to which the report referred, to wit, May, 1864, and as a consequence there is on record no adequate report of the part taken by this famous brigade in this campaign. All four regiments of this brigade participated in Upton's assault of May 10th, and it was the same brigade that General Russell led to such complete and glorious victory at Rappahannock Station in November, 1863.

On May 12th it was put into position to the right and possibly to the rear of Upton's brigade, and I have no doubt it did, with Upton's brigade, a full share of the fighting which devolved upon that part of the line during that eventful morning. But I have not been able to discover from the reports or regimental histories just what part was borne by Upton's brigade, and what by Russell's, any further than appears from extracts already quoted from the Official Records. But the fact that heavy losses were incurred by Russell's brigade during this period conclusively proves that the brigade was on the front line of battle, and giving and receiving sturdy blows.

The losses of this brigade from May 8th to the 21st, as given in the Official Records (p. 143), show the following: Sixth Maine, 135; Forty-ninth Pennsylvania, 274; One Hundred Nineteenth Pennsylvania, 145; Fifth Wisconsin, 149; Total, 703.

I have not been able to find any separate statement

of the losses borne by this brigade in Upton's assault of the 10th of May, but if we allow the same average made in the case of Upton's brigade, to wit, 100 to each regiment, the losses of the four regiments would amount to 400, which, deducted from the above total amount would make the loss of Russell's brigade, on May 12th, number 303 killed, wounded, and missing. Colonel Fox, in his *Regimental Losses*, p. 268, states that the Forty-ninth Pennsylvania lost 260 men in Upton's assault on May 10th. This would indicate that the proportion of losses by the brigade in the above total, chargeable to May 12th, should be still further reduced.

FOURTH BRIGADE OF THE FIRST DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS SHALER'S OR CROSS'S BRIGADE

This brigade consisted of five regiments, more particularly described as follows: Sixty-fifth, Sixty-seventh and One Hundred Twenty-second New York, and Twenty-third and Eighty-second Pennsylvania.

General Shaler was captured on the 6th of May, in the battle of the Wilderness, and the command of the brigade was thereupon devolved upon Colonel Nelson Cross.

In the report of Major H. R. Dalton, Assistant Adjutant-General of the First Division, Sixth Corps, given in O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 661, the following reference is made to this brigade. After speaking of the order of General Russell to put in his division on the right of the Second Corps, and after disposing of Upton's and Russell's brigades, the report mentions "the Fourth Brigade being put in at various points to fill up gaps along the whole line." Part of this brigade, under the command of Colonel Joseph E. Hamblin, was

sent to report to General Wheaton, and General Wheaton refers to it in his report[1] in the following language:

> At the same time [10 A.M.] I sent the One Hundred Thirty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers to the right and front to relieve a part of the Second [Vermont] Brigade, General Grant, and a part of the Fourth Brigade, First Division, under Col. Joseph E. Hamblin, which had exhausted their ammunition, and the One Hundred and Second Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers on the right and rear of them as a support and to guard against a flank attack.

I have not been able to discover which regiments were detailed for this duty.

In addition to what I have mentioned above from Major Dalton's report, he mentioned the fact that "the Fourth Brigade buried 480 Rebel dead in our front."

The losses of the brigade from May 8th to the 21st, as given in the Official Records, show the following: Sixty-fifth New York, 97; Sixty-seventh New York, 48; One Hundred Twenty-second New York, 24; Eighty-second Pennsylvania (detachment) 2; Total, 171.[2] These figures would seem to indicate that the two Pennsylvania regiments were not engaged at the Angle.

FIRST BRIGADE OF THE SECOND DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS, KNOWN AS WHEATON'S BRIGADE

This brigade consisted of the following five regiments: Sixty-second New York, Ninety-third Pennsylvania, Ninety-eighth Pennsylvania, One Hundred and Second Pennsylvania, and One Hundred Thirty-ninth Pennsylvania.

[1] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 684. [2] *Id.*, p. 145.

In General Wheaton's official report[1] he describes his movements as follows: "May 12, 6 A.M., ordered to the left and south a mile to support the Second Corps. . . . Advanced . . . within 50 yards of that part of the works . . . known as the Angle or Slaughter Pen." This is a good illustration of what was considered by the officers on that field as "supporting the Second Corps" at the Angle. Both the Bloody Angle and the Second Corps were from a quarter to a half mile distant from the part of the field where General Wheaton's brigade was located. He was in front of the position indicated on the diagram by the letters B, C, and D, and the Second Corps troops were at that time located in the lines between K and L.

At 10 A.M. that part of the line in front of my left which was greatly exposed to the enemy's fire from the pits still held by them, gave way, and I was obliged to send up the Ninety-third Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers, from my second line, to drive them back and retain the position. At the same time I sent the One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers to the right and front to relieve a part of the Second [Vermont] Brigade, General Grant, and a part of the Fourth [Cross's] Brigade, First Division, under Col. Joseph E. Hamblin, which had exhausted their ammunition, and the One Hundred and Second Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers on the right and rear of them as a support to guard against a flank attack. The One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers lost severely in this position, . . . All the regiments of my brigade behaved excellently well and fought with great spirit, although holding ground most disadvantageously opposed to an enemy strongly intrenched and close in our front, the distance in some places being less than sixty yards. At 12 M. the Sixty-second New York Veteran Volunteers and two

[1] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 684.

companies of the Ninety-eighth Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteers (the balance of that regiment being on picket a mile to the right), which had been in reserve, although in range of musketry and artillery fire, were ordered to relieve a part of the Second (Vermont) Brigade, on the left of the Ninety-third Pennsylvania. This was accomplished in good order, and these regiments, including the Ninety-third Pennsylvania Volunteers, held this position until relieved by a brigade of the Fifth Corps, under Colonel Bragg, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. At 1 P.M. the One Hundred Thirty-ninth and One Hundred and Second Pennsylvania Volunteers were relieved by a portion of the brigade of Colonel Smith, of the Third Division of this corps. The balance of the brigade was relieved by a portion of the Fifth Corps at 3 P.M., when I retired my whole command to the opening east of the enemy's works (the part still occupied by them), where they were somewhat shielded by the crest in front from the enemy's fire and they could rest and be supplied with ammunition. At 5 P.M. I was ordered to build a line of rifle-pits on the crest immediately in front, connecting with General Russell on the left and General Ricketts on the right, as a reserve line for defence, which was nearly completed, when, at 8 P.M., I was ordered, by a circuitous and tedious route, through the darkness, mud, rain, and woods, to the right of General Ricketts, which we did not reach until 11 P.M.

It thus appears that General Wheaton and his brigade were actively engaged in fighting the enemy in their works on the extreme right of the Sixth Corps lines from 6 A.M. to 3 P.M., and during that time they were assisted by portions of the Fourth Brigade, First Division (Cross's) and of the Second (Vermont) Brigade, Second Division, and were finally relieved by the Fifth Corps. How desperate the fighting appeared to the commander of the Vermont Brigade will more fully

appear when we come to the account of the part taken by that brigade in the battle.

At 5 P.M. General Wheaton's command was put into position between Ricketts's and Russell's divisions, with directions to fortify, after they had been withdrawn from the fighting line and were resting in the rear near Alsop's.

The losses of the brigade from May 8th to the 21st, as given in the Official Records, show the following: Sixty-second New York, 12; Ninety-third Pennsylvania, 79; Ninety-eighth Pennsylvania, 20; One Hundred and Second Pennsylvania, 44; One Hundred Thirty-ninth Pennsylvania, 116; Total, 271, distributed among five regiments.[1]

SECOND BRIGADE OF THE SECOND DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE VERMONT BRIGADE

This brigade consisted at this time of five regiments: The Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Vermont Volunteers. These were under the command of Colonel Lewis A. Grant. Colonel Grant, in his official report[2] gives the following account of the part taken by his brigade in the battle of the Angle.

When the Second Corps was driven back, his command was ordered to the extreme left of the Second Corps which was at that time at the extreme left of the Army of the Potomac. The brigade was formed in two lines, threw out skirmishers, and fortified. From the Bloody Angle to the left the Federal troops held the Rebel works, and from the Angle to the right the enemy held them. General Russell commanded the division in the centre and was hard pressed. Colonel Grant was ordered to go to the support of General Russell. Accord-

[1] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 145.

[2] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 702.

ingly he took regiments of the rear line of the brigade to the Angle and was then ordered to the support of General Wheaton, commanding a brigade farther to the right. He found General Wheaton trying to advance amidst thick brush, and in the face of a deadly fire from Rebel rifle-pits. It was impossible to carry the works on the right by direct attack, and the enemy were gaining advantage at the Angle. Leaving the Fourth Vermont in command of General Wheaton, he went back to the Angle, and Colonel Seaver came up from the left with the balance of the brigade, and it was all put into the engagement at that point except the Sixth Regiment, which was held in reserve in the rear of a swell of ground. This was the key-point to both armies and the fighting was of the most desperate and determined character. This point held, and the whole line of works must necessarily fall into the hands of the victorious party.

Three regiments from this brigade took part in Upton's assault of May 10th, and according to Benedict's *History of Vermont in the Civil War*, their loss in that assault was eighty-eight men.

The losses from May 8th to the 21st of said brigade, as given in the Official War Records, show the following: Second Vermont, 123; Third Vermont, 74; Fourth Vermont, 42; Fifth Vermont, 75; Sixth Vermont, 37; Total, 351. Subtracting losses in Upton's assault, 88, will leave 263, killed, wounded, and missing, as the number from the brigade chargeable against the fight of the 12th of May.

THIRD BRIGADE OF THE SECOND DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS BIDWELL'S BRIGADE

This brigade consisted of the five following regiments:

The Seventh Maine, Forty-third New York, Forty-ninth New York, Seventy-seventh New York, and Sixty-first Pennsylvania.

Colonel Bidwell succeeded General Neill in command of the brigade when General Neill was promoted to the command of the division at the time of General Sedgwick's death.

Colonel Bidwell's report [1] gives the following account of the part taken by his brigade in the battle:

> On the morning of the 12th we were moved to the rear of the position just captured by General Hancock, and ordered to support a brigade of this division, commanded by Colonel Edwards, at the Angle. The brigade was deployed in line and moved to this point, and two of the regiments, the Forty-ninth and Seventy-seventh New York, charged the Angle and took possession of the crest commanding it, which they held until relieved. The Forty-third New York, Sixty-first Pennsylvania Volunteers, and Seventh Maine were deployed on the right of this position, supporting General Upton's brigade. The first line losing heavily and closing to the left caused a vacancy, which these three regiments moved into and where they remained two hours, delivering a musketry fire, and were relieved and moved to the left to the support of a brigade of the Second Corps. The troops which relieved the Forty-ninth and Seventy-seventh New York were driven back, and those two regiments, with a portion of the Vermont Brigade, formed and retook the crest. About dark the whole line was withdrawn about 300 yards and went into bivouac for the night.

My understanding is that this brigade in the early morning, from 6 to 9.30 o'clock, occupied the exterior line of the enemy's earthworks, between G and D on the diagram, but owing to the enfilading fire was unable

[1] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 720.

to retain such possession, meeting the same fate that befell the Vermont Brigade and the New Jersey Brigade in their attempts to hold that part of the enemy's exterior line, and a portion of the brigade was then put into position in the line of the crest occupied by Upton's brigade. Subsequently a portion of the Forty-ninth and Seventy-seventh New York joined with the Vermont Brigade in its attempt to capture the enemy's works, in which attempt they failed. The brigade was actively engaged most of the time between 6 in the morning and 8 in the evening.

Two regiments from this brigade participated in Upton's assault on the 10th of May and bore their proportionate share of the losses of that engagement. The average of such losses to each regiment I have estimated at 100, making the loss of the brigade on that occasion 200.

The losses from May 8th to the 21st of this brigade, as given in the Official War Records, show the following: Seventh Maine, 126; Forty-third New York, 51; Forty-ninth New York, 131; Seventy-seventh New York, 107; Sixty-first Pennsylvania, 139; Total, 554, or, after deducting 200 for Upton's charge, there still remained a loss of 354 to be distributed among the five regiments.

FOURTH BRIGADE OF THE SECOND DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS EUSTIS'S OR EDWARDS'S BRIGADE

This brigade consisted of four regiments, the Seventh, Tenth, and Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, and the Second Rhode Island.

The Seventh was detailed to do picket duty in front of the Sixth Corps line on the 12th of May, and was not actively engaged in the battle at the Bloody Angle.

The three other regiments above mentioned numbered about 900 men present for duty. The brigade was commanded by Brigadier-General Henry L. Eustis until May 9th, when General Eustis was transferred to the command of the Third Brigade, First Division, Sixth Corps, and Colonel Edwards succeeded him in command of the Fourth Brigade, Second Division. The parts taken by the regiments of this brigade at the Salient have already been described.

The losses from May 8th to 21st of these three regiments, as given in the Official Records, show the following: Tenth Massachusetts, 92; Thirty-seventh Massachusetts, 91; Second Rhode Island, 53; Total, 236.

Some of this loss was incurred by these regiments in an attempt which the Sixth and Second Corps made to surprise and capture a portion of the Spottsylvania works at the base of the Salient on the morning of May 18th, which attempt was unsuccessful and was abandoned as soon as it was found that the enemy were in the works in full force. But I can safely say that the loss of the three regiments who participated in the battle of the Angle on May 12th exceeded 200 in number, to be distributed among the three regiments.

By Lieutenant-Colonel Montague's wounds the command of the regiment was devolved upon Captain Donnelly.

FIRST BRIGADE OF THE THIRD DIVISION, SIXTH ARMY CORPS

This brigade was composed of five regiments as follows: Tenth Vermont, One Hundred and Sixth and One Hundred and Fifty-first New York, Fourteenth New Jersey, Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania, and was commanded by Brigadier-General William H. Morris.

As already mentioned, the Third Division was left in charge of the Sixth Corps works in the vicinity of the Alsop house, when the First and Second were ordered to go to the assistance of the Second Corps, and they so remained until about 10 o'clock of the morning of May 12th, when the Third Division was ordered to join the rest of the corps in the vicinity of the Angle.

I think this brigade was posted during the day in the rear of Upton's line of battle, and in the afternoon was with the Second Division returned to the vicinity of the Alsop house, where it was joined by Wheaton's brigade and the First Division of the Sixth Corps as before related.[1]

The losses from May 8th to the 21st of this brigade, as given in the Official Records, show the following: Tenth Vermont, 24; One Hundred and Sixth New York, 38; One Hundred and Fifty-first New York, 23; Fourteenth New Jersey, 28; Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania, 35; Total loss, 148.

What portion of this loss, if any, was incurred through participation in the other engagements in and about Spottsylvania I am unable to state.

SECOND BRIGADE OF THE THIRD DIVISION, SIXTH CORPS

This brigade was composed of six regiments as follows: Sixty-seventh and One Hundred Thirty-eighth Pennsylvania, Sixth Maryland, One hundred Tenth and One Hundred Twenty-second and One hundred Twenty-sixth Ohio.

It was commanded successively in this campaign by Colonel Benjamin F. Smith and by Colonel J. W. Keifer, afterwards Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Colonel Keifer in his official report[2] states as follows:

[1] See O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 725. [2] O. R., xxxvi., pt. 1, p. 733.

"On the 12th the brigade with the division was formed one mile to the left,[1] about 11 A.M., in support of the First and Second Divisions, Sixth Army Corps, but was not heavily engaged." At page 749 of the same volume, the commander of the One Hundred Twenty-sixth Ohio reports that his "regiment was detached from the division and sent to support Brigadier-General Wheaton's brigade of the Second Division, Sixth Army Corps." It was marched to the front line and engaged the enemy. Fifty rounds of ammunition were exhausted before the regiment was withdrawn.

The report of Colonel Otho H. Brinkley of the One Hundred Tenth Ohio,[2] states:

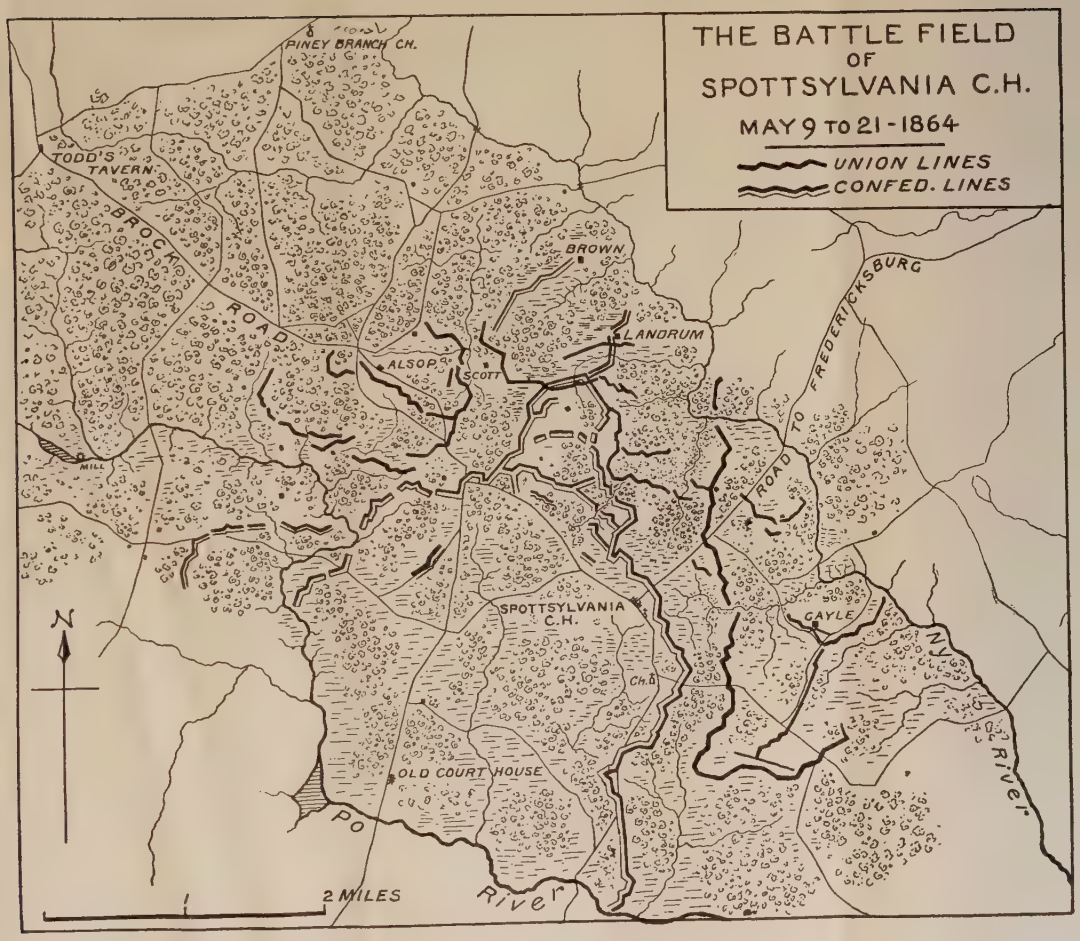
> On the 12th, although not actually engaged, we were constantly manœuvring, and during the whole of the day and until 10 o'clock at night were exposed to a destructive fire of musketry and artillery. During the early part of the day we occupied a position between the enemy's artillery and our own, and being protected by light earthworks but little harm was done us.

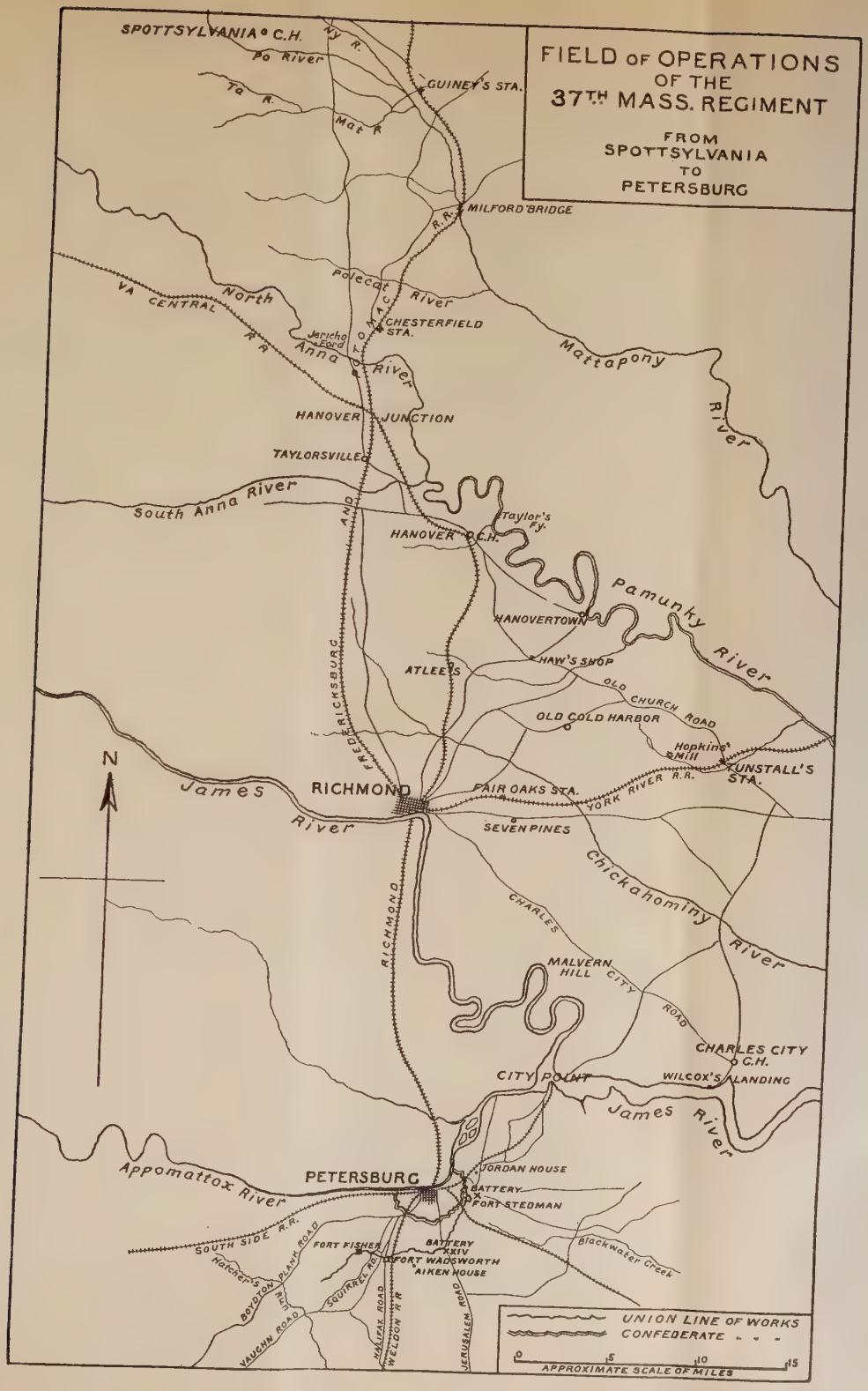
The losses from May 8th to the 21st of the brigade, as given in the Official Records, show the following: Sixty-seventh Pennsylvania, 15; One Hundred Thirty-eighth Pennsylvania, 12; Sixth Maryland, 6; One Hundred Tenth Ohio, 34; One Hundred Twenty-second Ohio, 12; One Hundred Twenty-sixth Ohio, 78; Total, 157.

There were only two brigades in the Third Division of the Sixth Corps at this time.

[1] Of their place in the Sixth Corps lines.

[2] *Id.*, p. 742.


THE BATTLE FIELD
OF
SPOTTSYLVANIA C.H.
MAY 9 TO 21 - 1864
UNION LINES
CONFED. LINES
PINEY BRANCH CH.
TODD'S TAVERN
BROCK ROAD
BROWN
LANDRUM
ALSOP
SCOTT
MILL
ROAD TO FREDERICKSBURG
SPOTTSYLVANIA C.H.
GAYLE
Ch.
OLD COURT HOUSE
PO River
NY River
N
2 MILES


FIELD OF OPERATIONS OF THE 37TH MASS. REGIMENT
FROM SPOTTSYLVANIA TO PETERSBURG
SPOTTSYLVANIA C.H.
Ny R.
Po River
Ta R.
Mat R.
GUINEY'S STA.
MILFORD BRIDGE
R.R.
Polecat River
VA CENTRAL R.R.
North Anna River
Jericho Ford
CHESTERFIELD STA.
Mattapony River
HANOVER JUNCTION
TAYLORSVILLE
South Anna River
Taylor's Fy.
HANOVER C.H.
Pamunky River
HANOVERTOWN
HAW'S SHOP
ATLEE'S
OLD CHURCH ROAD
OLD COLD HARBOR
Hopkins' Mill
UNSTALL'S STA.
FREDERICKSBURG
N
James River
RICHMOND
FAIR OAKS STA.
YORK RIVER R.R.
SEVEN PINES
Chickahominy River
CHARLES
RICHMOND
MALVERN HILL
CITY ROAD
CHARLES CITY C.H.
CITY POINT
WILCOX'S LANDING
James River
Appomattox River
PETERSBURG
JORDAN HOUSE
BATTERY
FORT STEDMAN
SOUTH SIDE R.R.
FORT FISHER
BATTERY XXIV
FORT WADSWORTH
AIKEN HOUSE
Blackwater Creek
Hatcher's
BOYDTON PLANK ROAD
SQUIRREL LEVEL ROAD
HALIFAX ROAD
WELDON R.R.
JERUSALEM ROAD
VAUGHN ROAD
UNION LINE OF WORKS
CONFEDERATE
0 5 10 15
APPROXIMATE SCALE OF MILES

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